

**MARVEL**

**#234**

**DAVID  
KIRK  
MILLA**

# X-FACTOR<sup>®</sup>





Founded by Jamie Madrox and staffed by a group of the best mutant heroes around, when superhumanity needs a detective agency, they call on X-Factor Investigations.

# X-FACTOR

**MULTIPLE MAN**



**JAMIE MADROX**  
Self-Duplication

**BUTTERFLY**



**LAYLA MILLER**  
Resurrection

**SHATTERSTAR**



**GAVEEDRA SEVEN**  
Teleportation

**RICTOR**



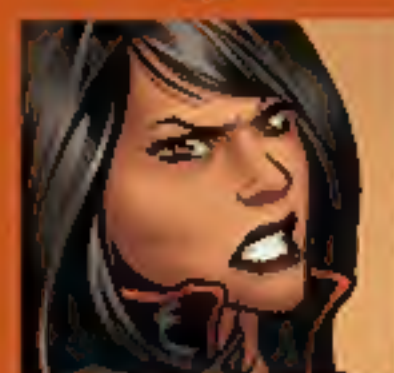
**JULIO RICHTER**  
Seismic Control

**STRONG GUY**



**GUIDO CAROSELLA**  
Strong Guy

**M**



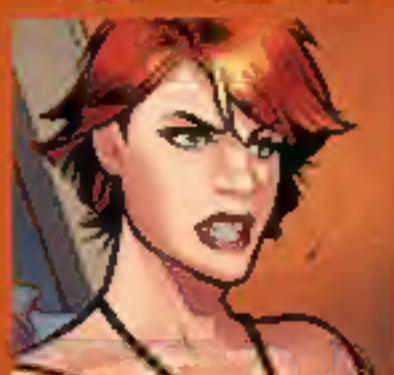
**MONET ST. CROIX**  
Telepathy, Flight, Super-Strength,  
Invulnerability, Telekinesis

**BANSHEE**



**THERESA CASSIDY**  
Sonic Scream,  
Suggestion

**WOLFSBANE**



**RAHNE SINCLAIR**  
Werewolf

**LONGSHOT**



Luck

**PIP THE TROLL**



**PIP GOFERN**  
Troll

**HAVOK**



**ALEX SUMMERS**  
Cosmic Energy  
Blasts

**POLARIS**



**LORNA DANE**  
Magnetic Control

## PREVIOUSLY

Jamie Madrox returned from his multiple-dimensional jaunt to wind up in Layla's arms. Their newly found intimacy led to some subsequent unease, but that was nothing compared to Madrox discovering that the team, who still believes him dead, is now under the command of Havok and Polaris. Meanwhile, the Isolationist, the bad guy who has the power of every mutant on Earth, receives an unusual visitor with an even more unusual agenda...

**NOT ONLY THAT:** But Peter's daughter, Caroline, has earned her orange belt in kung fu. Peter's hoping that when she reaches green belt, they'll teach her to summon the fist of iron to deal with the boys who will certainly come sniffing around once she hits her teens.

**PETER DAVID**  
writer

**LEONARD KIRK**  
artist

**MATT MILLA**  
colorist

**VC'S CORY PETIT**  
letterer

**DAVID YARDIN**  
cover artist

**JORDAN D. WHITE**  
assistant editor

**DANIEL KETCHUM**  
editor

**NICK LOWE**  
x-men group editor

**AXEL ALONSO**  
editor in chief

**JOE QUESADA**  
chief creative officer

**DAN BUCKLEY**  
publisher

**ALAN FINE**  
executive producer



SO YOU  
WISH TO  
BRING ABOUT  
APOCALYPSE.

JUST SO  
WE'RE CLEAR...  
YOU'RE REFERRING  
TO THE EVENT  
AND NOT--?

NOT  
TO THE  
INDIVIDUAL,  
NO.

HOW DO  
YOU SURVIVE  
OUT HERE IN THE  
MIDDLE OF NOWHERE?  
DO YOU EAT? DO  
YOU EVEN NEED  
FOOD?

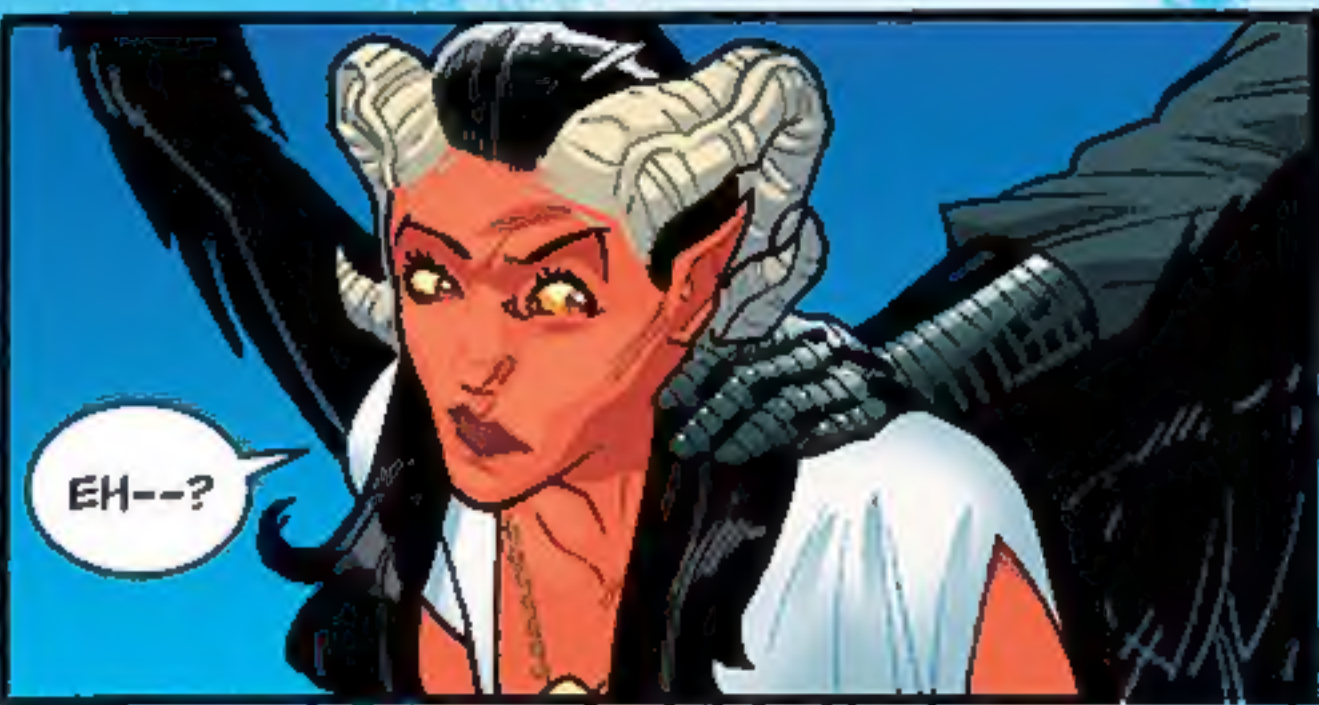
I HAVE...  
MEANS.





HOW NICE.

DO YOU HAVE ANY OF THOSE LITTLE HOT DOGS IN ROLLS...?



EH--?




YOU THINK YOU JUST WALK IN HERE, TALKING OF ENDING THE WORLD?  
RAISING FALSE HOPE WITHIN ME?

LINNFFFFFI



WHO IN HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?







IN HELL,  
I AM CALLED  
JEZEBEL!



DAUGHTER  
OF ABOVE  
AND BELOW!



AND YOU  
WOULD BE WELL  
ADVISED NOT TO  
PISS ME OFF!



ALL RIGHT...  
JEZEBEL...  
PERHAPS I  
REACTED TOO  
HASTILY.



THAT'S A  
MISTAKE. EVEN  
IN THE FROZEN  
WASTELAND...

...ONE  
SHOULD TAKE  
TIME TO SMELL  
THE ROSES.





MMMM...

LORNA?



UHM...  
HONEY?

YES,  
ALEX?

YOU  
KNOW YOU,  
UH, JUMPED  
OUT OF THE  
CHOPPER,  
RIGHT?

YUP.

WHILE WE  
WERE OVER  
CENTRAL PARK.  
KIND OF A LONG  
WAY DOWN.

EASY ENOUGH  
TO FLOAT ON  
MAGNETIC WAVES.  
HOW'D YOU  
GET DOWN?

BANSHEE  
GAVE ME A  
LIFT. THAT WAS  
A SCREAM.

POINT IS,  
YOU, UH...KIND  
OF DREW  
ATTENTION TO  
YOURSELF.

OH, YOU'RE  
EXAGGERATING.







NOT SO MUCH AS YOU'D THINK.

OH.  
OOPS.



I JUST...I SAW ALL THE GREEN AND...

YOUR HAIR FELT DRAWN TO IT?

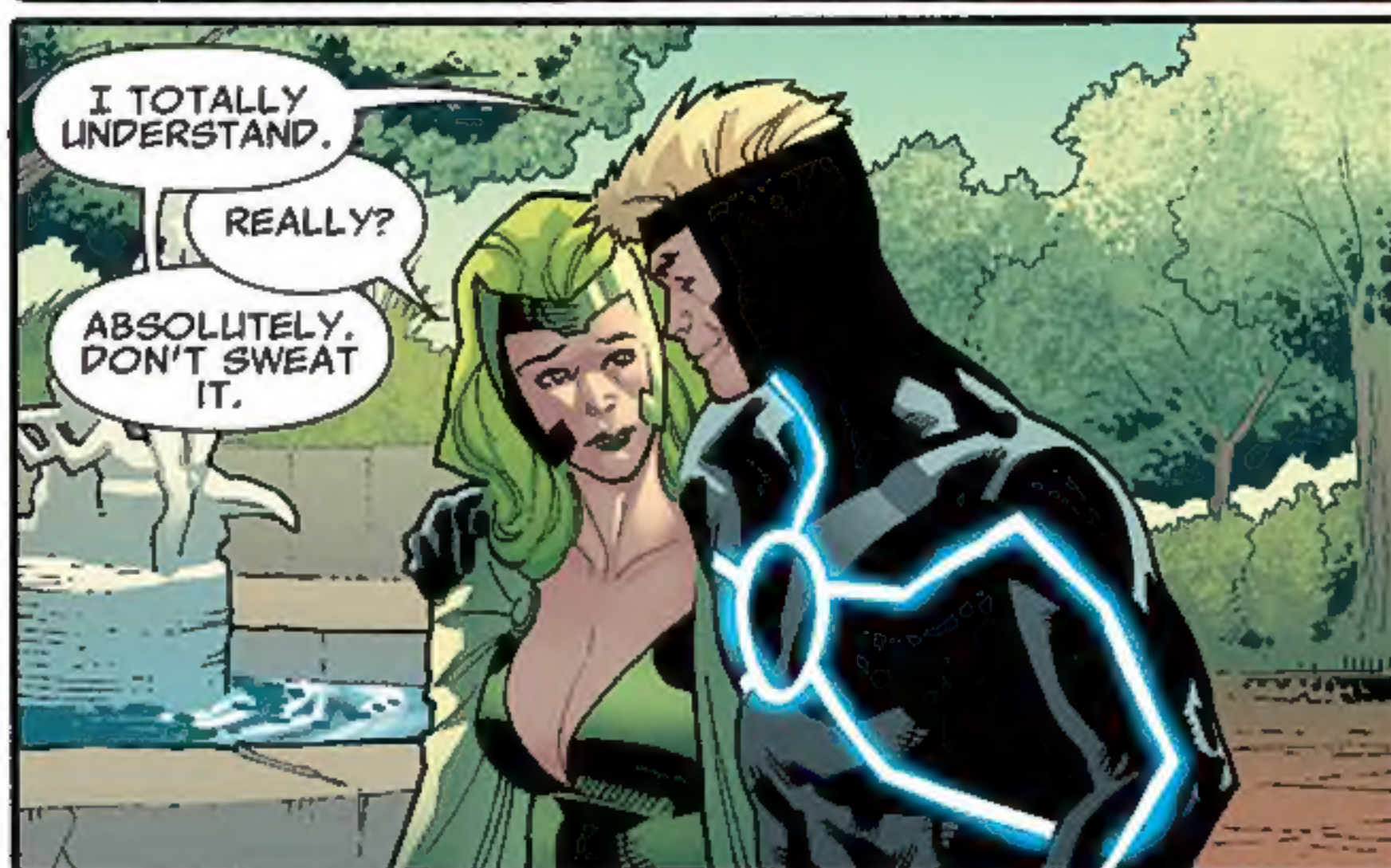
YOU KNOW, IF MAKING STUPID JOKES IS REQUIRED FOR BEING HEAD OF X-FACTOR, YOU AND I ARE GOING TO HAVE A PROBLEM.



SORRY, YOU WERE SAYING---

WE WERE JUST OFF IN SPACE FOR SO LONG, AND THEN WE HAD TO HIT THE GROUND RUNNING HERE.

I JUST FELT LIKE I COULDN'T WAIT ANOTHER MINUTE TO GET, YOU KNOW...DOWN TO EARTH.



I TOTALLY UNDERSTAND.

REALLY?

ABSOLUTELY. DON'T SWEAT IT.



I'M SURE THERE'S NOTHING SO SHOCKING BACK AT HQ THAT IT CAN'T WAIT AN HOUR.

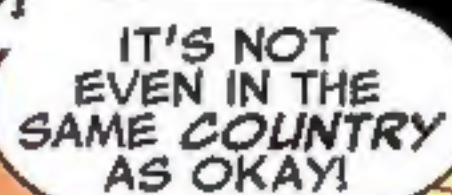
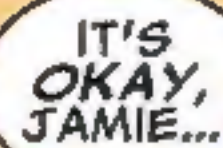




I DON'T  
GET YOU PEOPLE.  
WHY DOES ANYONE  
EVEN ACT SURPRISED  
ANYMORE WHEN  
STUFF LIKE THIS  
HAPPENS?

# LONG DISTANCE CALL









MONET, LET HER GO!

FORGET IT! YOU'D JUST TAKE HER SIDE!

YOU WON'T BE HAPPY UNTIL SHE BRINGS BACK DADDY DEAREST, HUNGERING FOR BRAINS!



SHOULDN'T YOU GET IN THERE TO SEPARATE THEM, GUIDO? YOU'RE THE STRONGEST.

YOU KIDDING? IT'S CHICK ON CHICK ACTION. NO WAY I'M BREAKING THAT UP.



THAT'S ENOUGH! I SAID THAT'S EN--



I'LL SAY WHEN IT'S ENOUGH, AND WE'RE NOT EVEN CLOSE TO IT!



THERESA! GO AFTER HER!

Y'KNOW WHAT? IF MONET REALLY WANTED T'HURT HER, SHE COULD'VE CAVED HER FACE IN RIGHT HERE.

LET'S LET 'EM BE.

ARE YOU KIDDING--?!



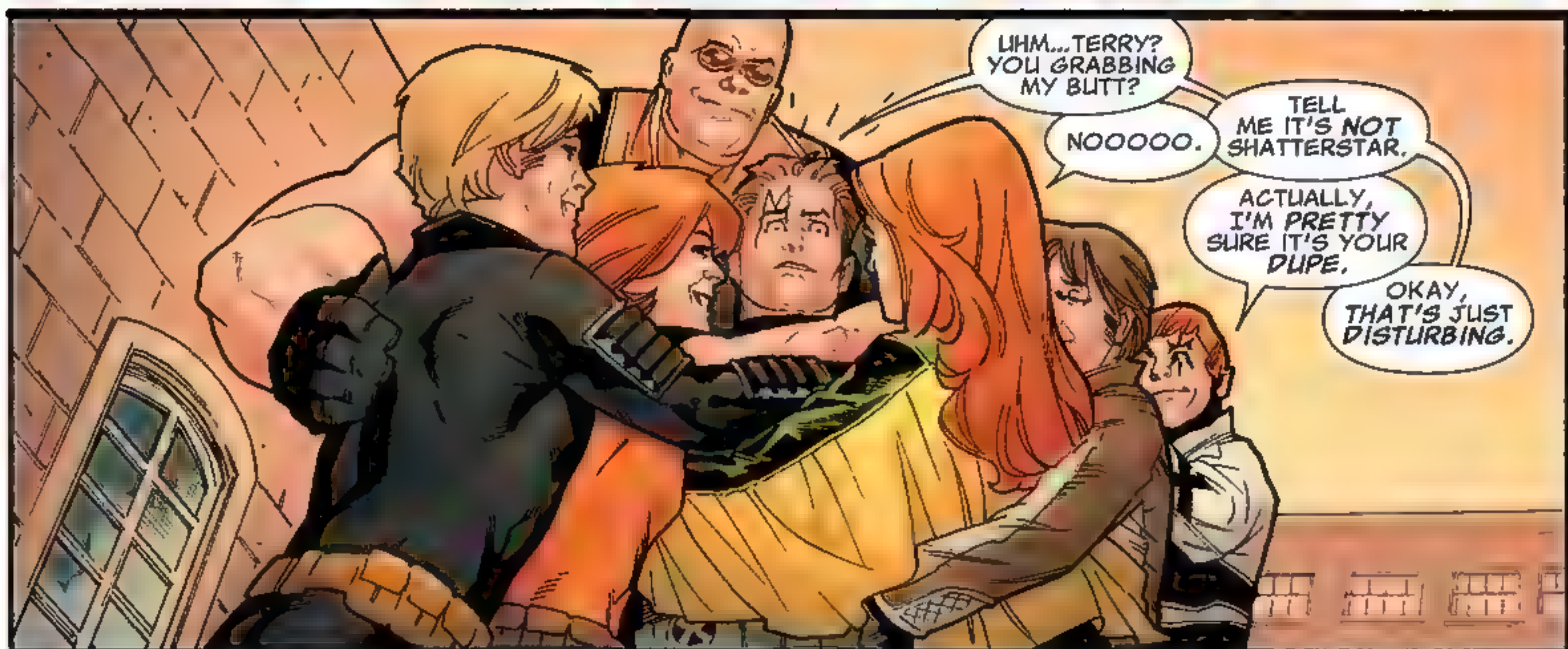
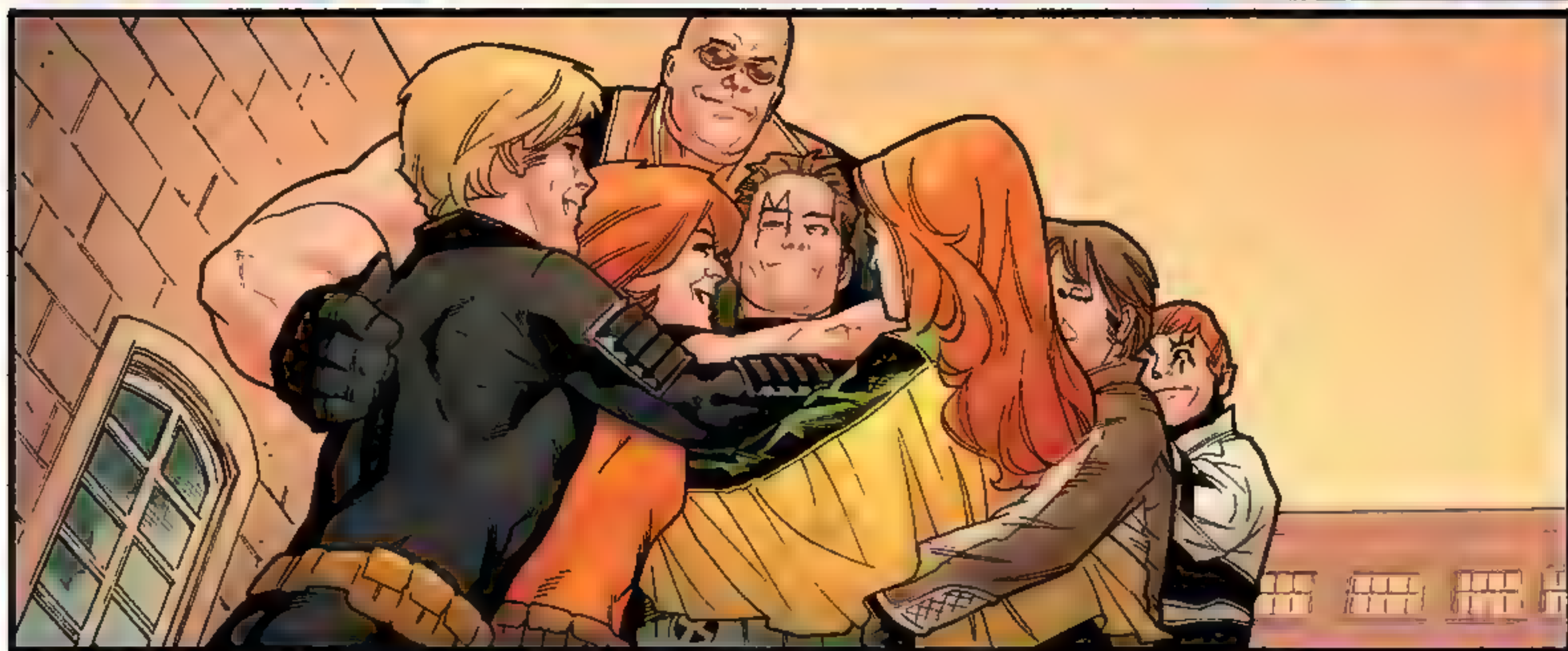
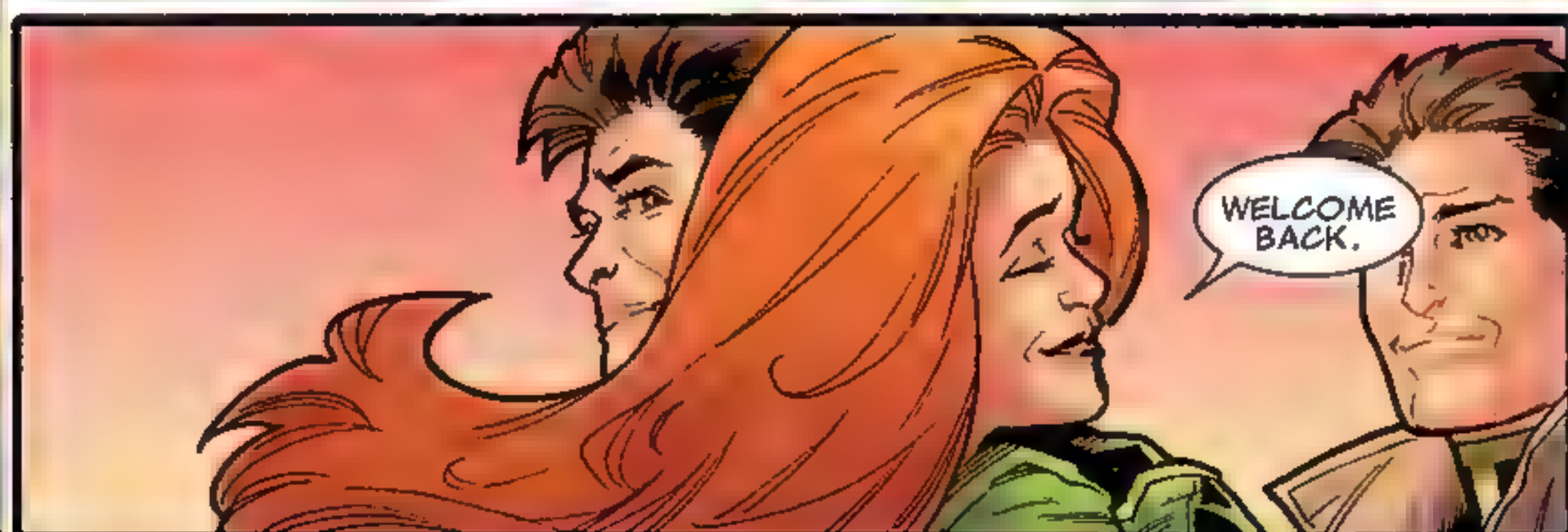
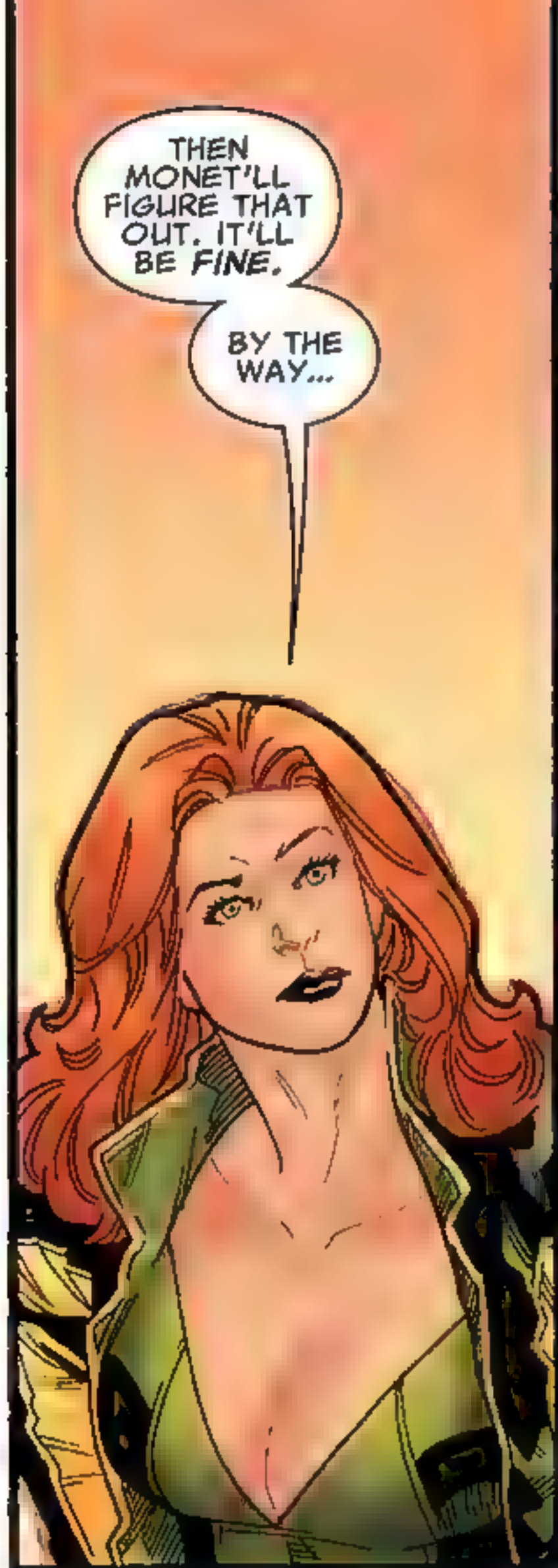
DO I LOOK LIKE I'M KIDDING?

NOT SO MUCH, NO.

DID LAYLA BRING YOU BACK FROM THE DEAD?

NOPE.









AND LET ME KNOW IF I'M WALKING TOO FAR IN FRONT OF YOU.  
AND MAKE SURE YOU KEEP ME IN FOCUS.



I'M SHUTTERBUG, REMEMBER? VIDEOING SUPER HEROES IS, Y'KNOW, MY WHOLE POWER.  
SO DON'T TELL ME HOW TO DO MY JOB, OKAY, INSIGNIA?



IT'S NOT INSIGNIA. IT'S THE INSIGNIA. IT SOUNDS COOLER.

I'M SUPPOSED TO CALL YOU "THE INSIGNIA" IN CONVERSATION AND IT'S COOL? SERIOUSLY?



"HOW'S IT GOING, THE INSIGNIA?"  
"CATCH ANY BAD GUYS, THE INSIGNIA?"

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. POINT TAKEN.



THE LIGHT ISN'T GREAT, BY THE WAY.

IT'S CLOUDY, RAIN'S ROLLING IN.

BIG SHOCK. IT'S SEATTLE.



WE'LL MAKE IT A SHORT PATROL THEN. I'M STILL HOPING TO CATCH A LEAD ON THE CASE.

YOU MEAN CATCHING THAT SERIAL GROPERS?



THE WOMEN OF SEATTLE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GO ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS WITHOUT WORRYING THAT SOME GUY'S GONNA JUMP OUT AND GRAB THEIR--



WHAT THE HELL?



AAAAAHHH!



OH MY GOD! WHAT IS THAT?!! WHAT IS--!!!

NO! NO!!! N--





**THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING.**

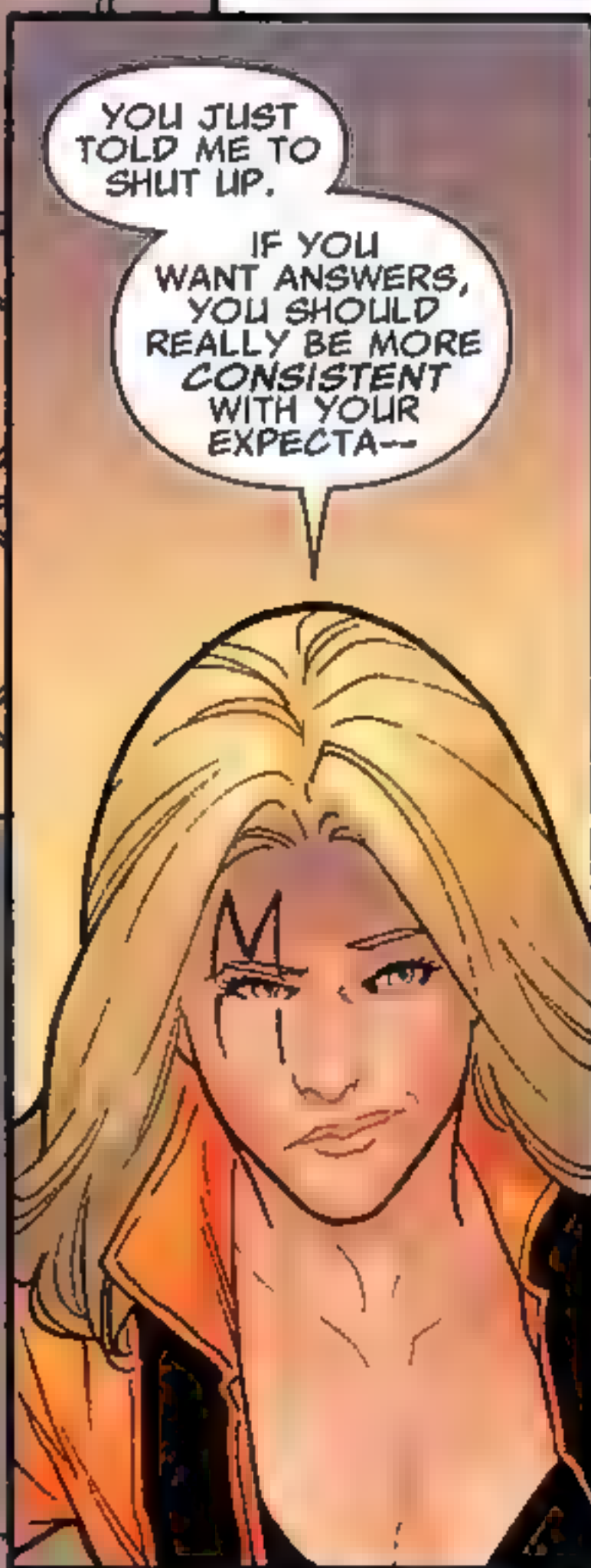






HOW COULD YOU DO IT? HOW COULD YOU TURN MADROX INTO ANOTHER SOULLESS THING?

WELL? GOT NOTHING TO SAY FOR YOURSELF?

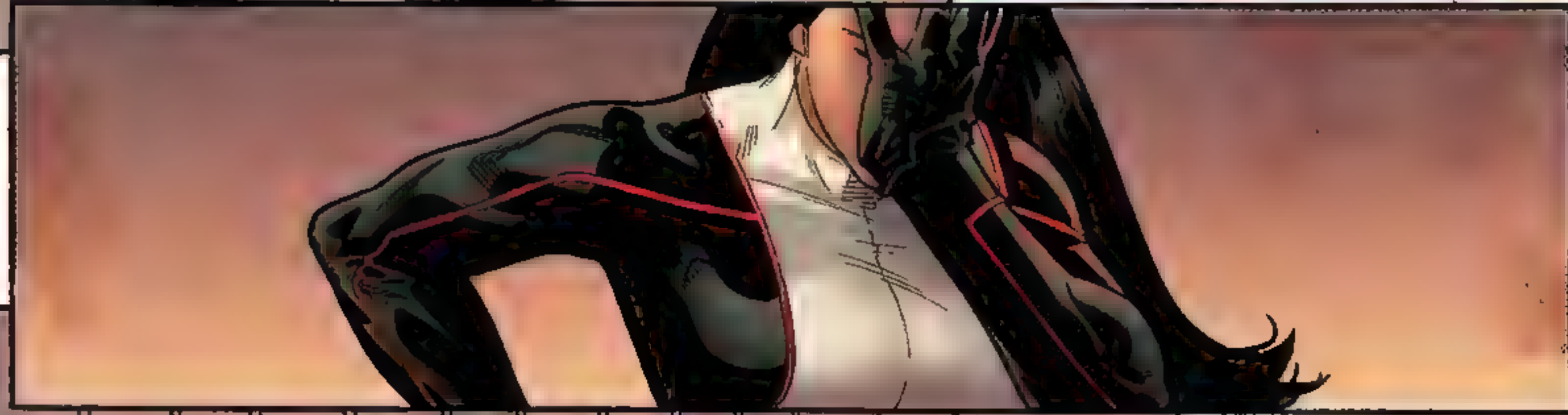


YOU JUST TOLD ME TO SHUT UP.

IF YOU WANT ANSWERS, YOU SHOULD REALLY BE MORE CONSISTENT WITH YOUR EXPECTA--



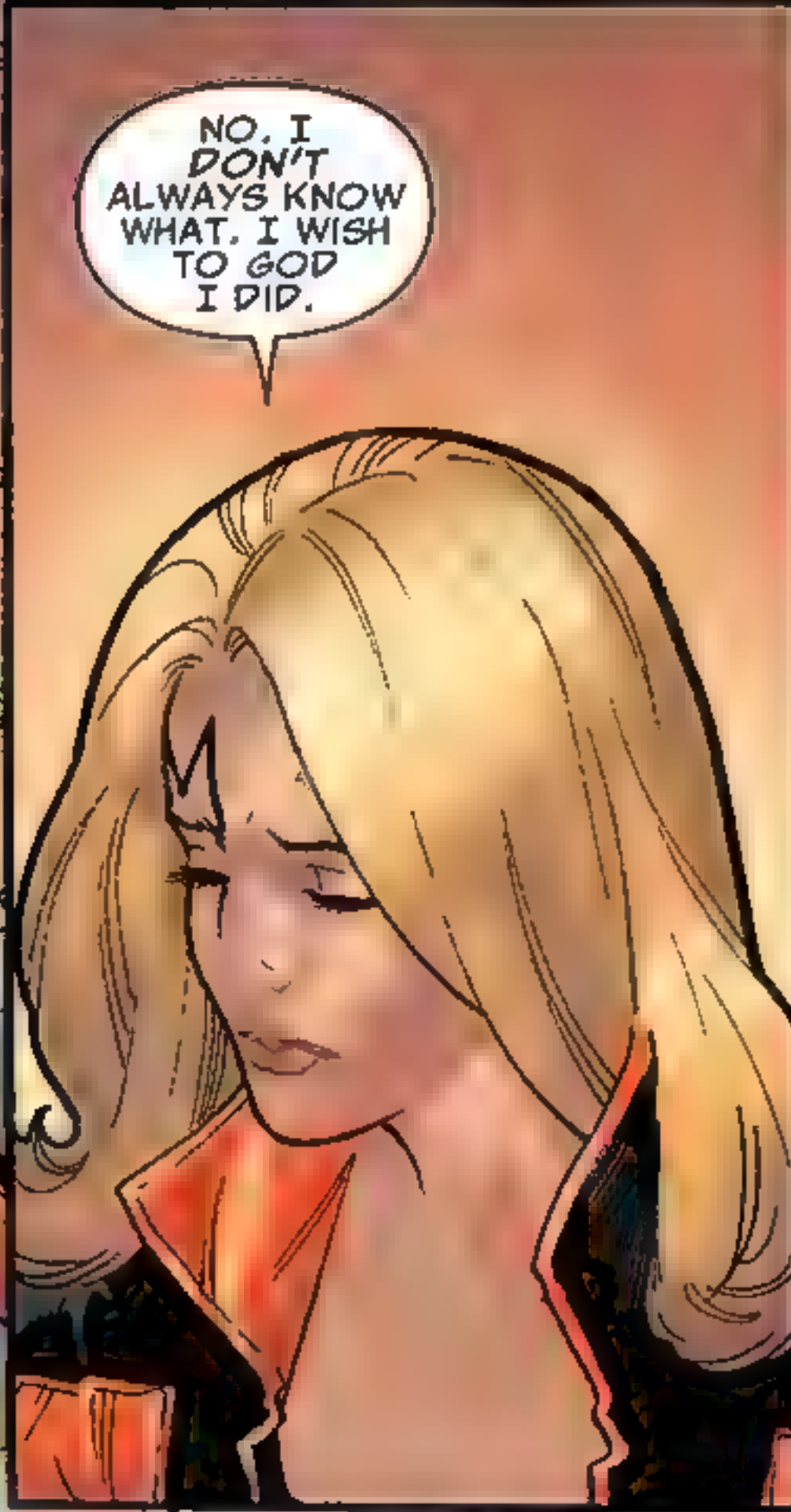
SHUT UP!



FINE. TALK.

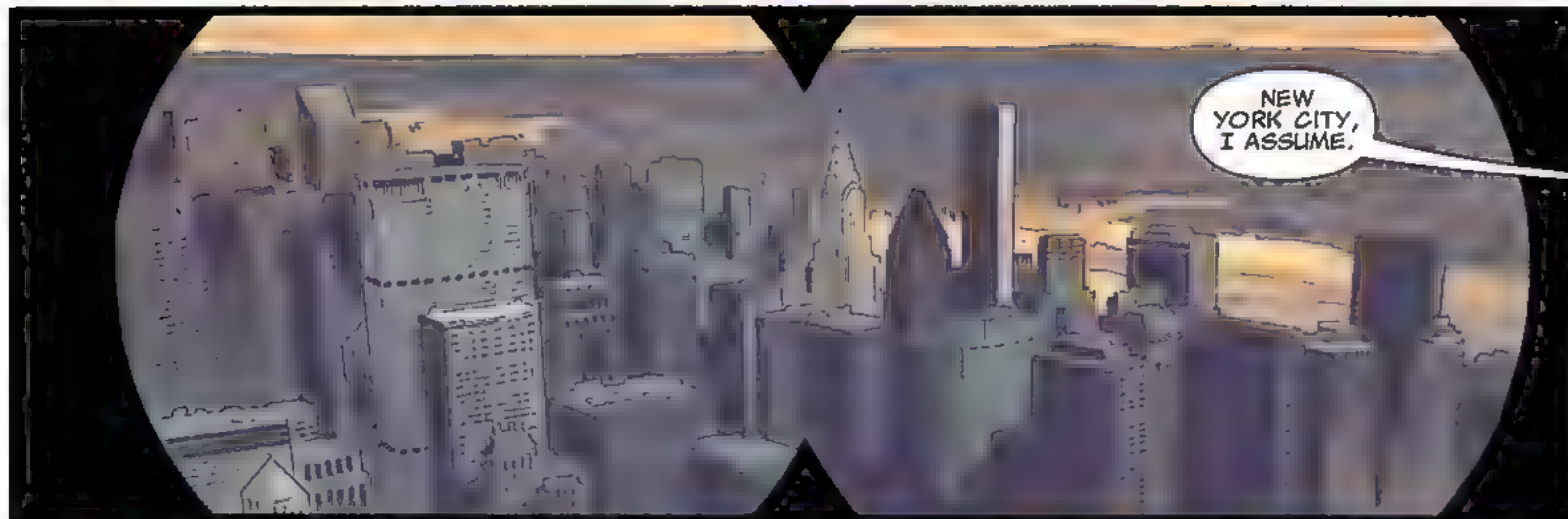
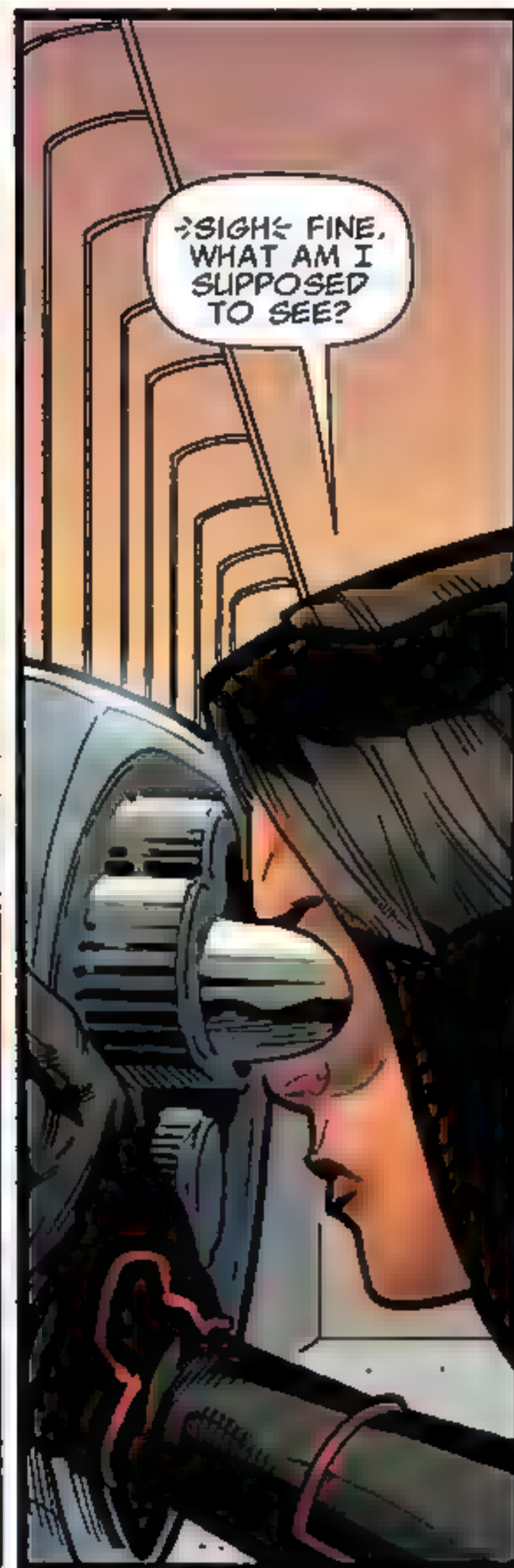
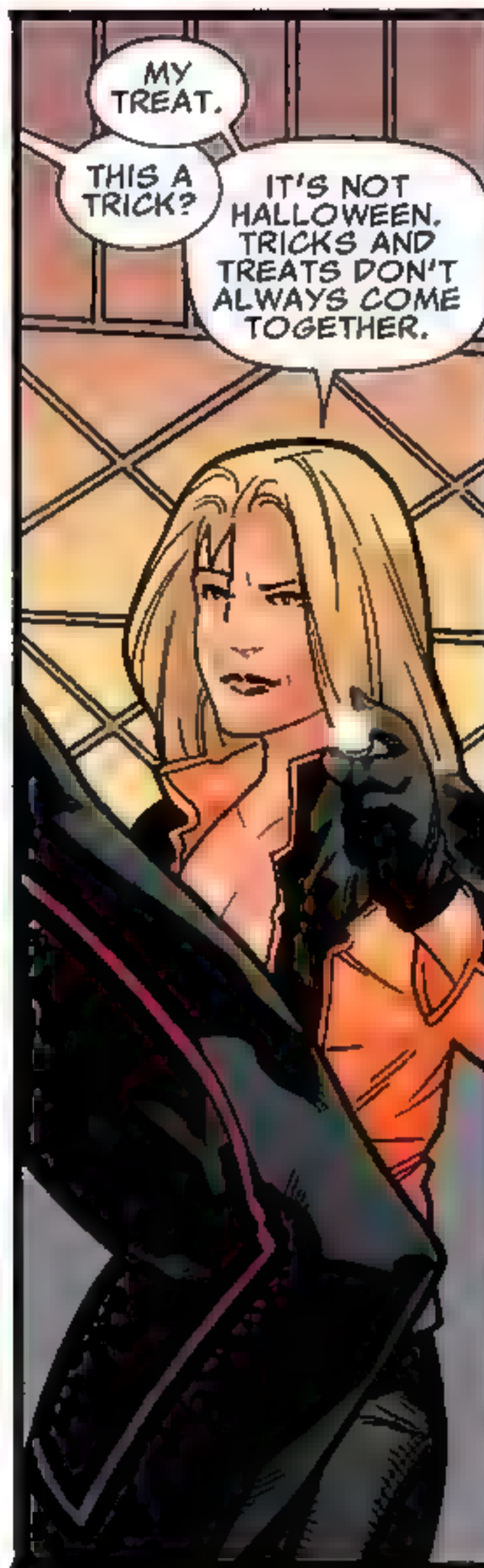
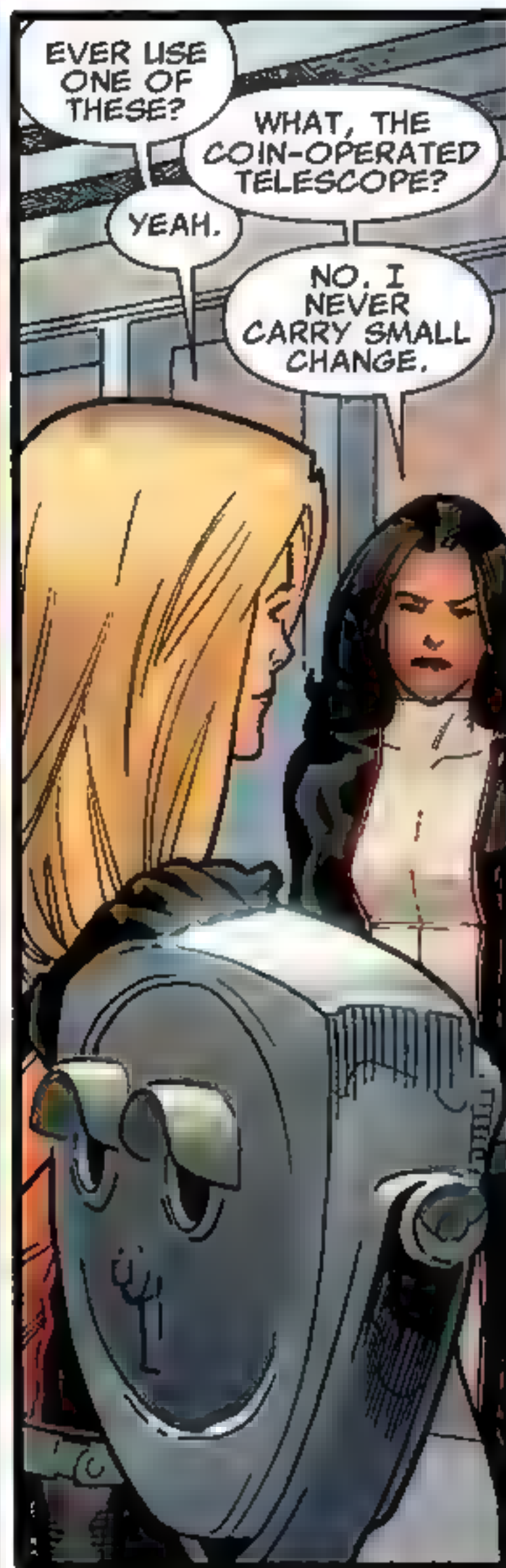
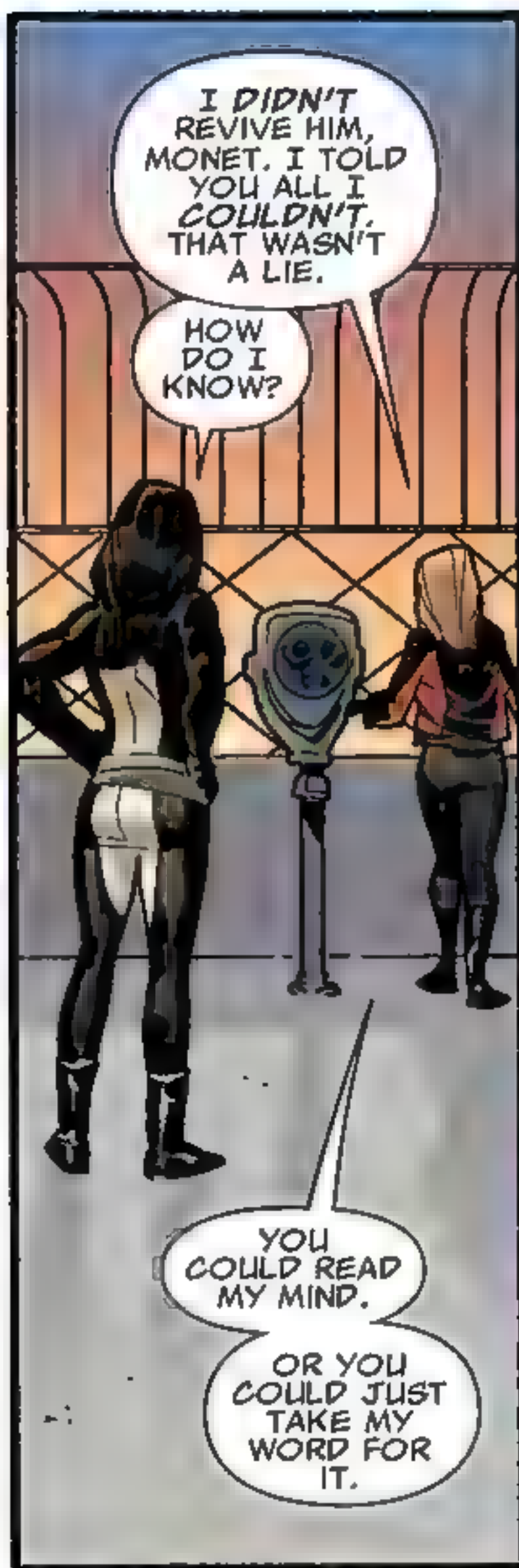
ABOUT WHAT? I'M JUST TRYING TO BE PRECISE--

YOU KNOW WHAT, YOU ALWAYS KNOW WHAT.

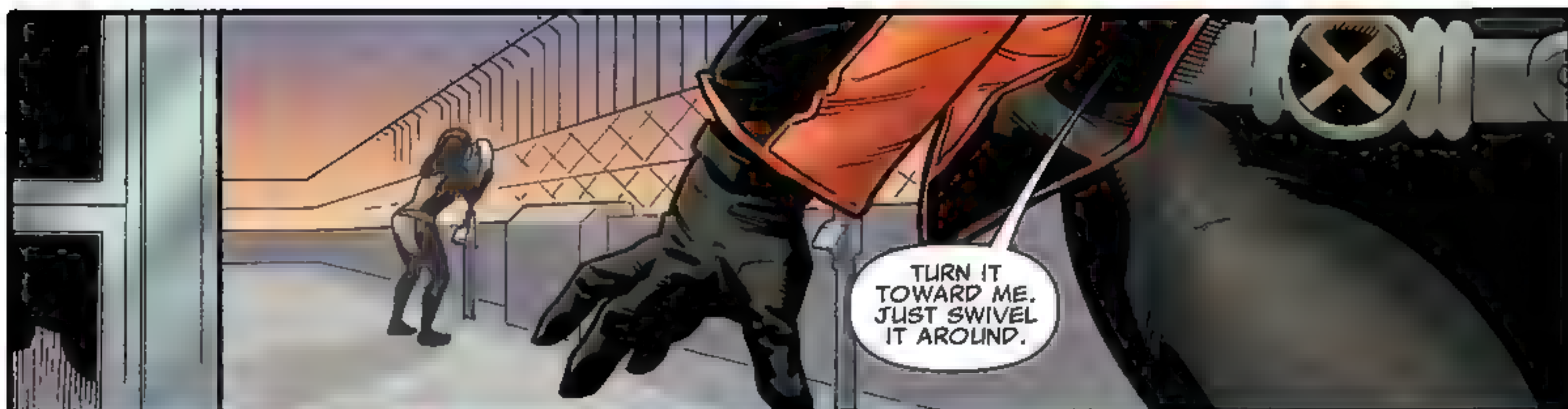


NO. I DON'T ALWAYS KNOW WHAT. I WISH TO GOD I DID.

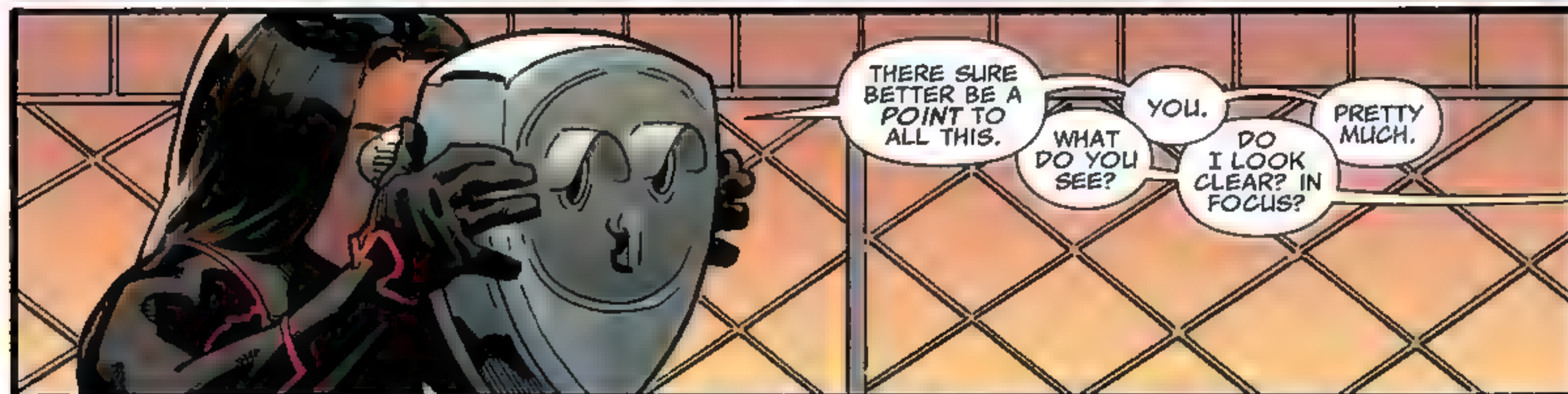








TURN IT TOWARD ME. JUST SWIVEL IT AROUND.



THERE SURE BETTER BE A POINT TO ALL THIS.

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

YOU.

DO I LOOK CLEAR? IN FOCUS?

PRETTY MUCH.



OKAY, HOW ABOUT NOW?

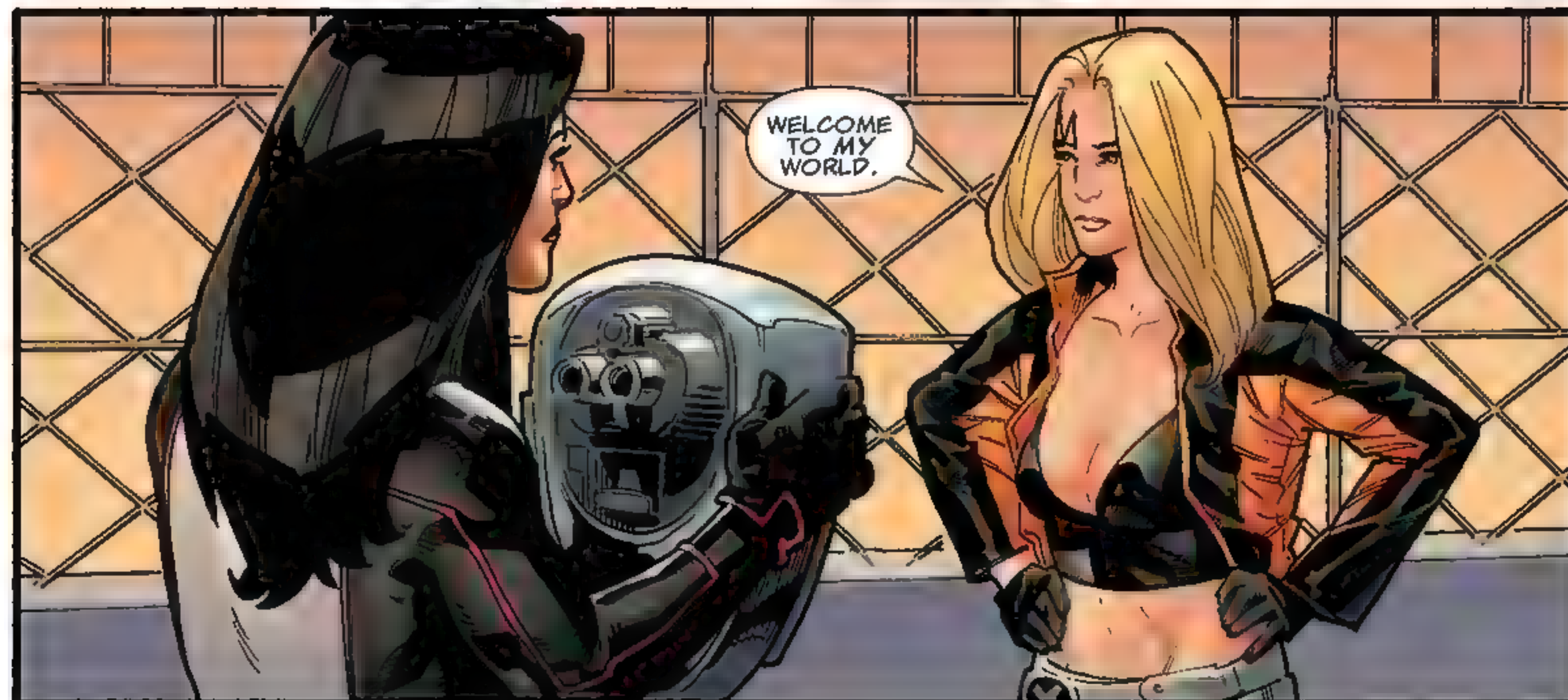


YOU'RE GETTING BLURRY. THIS IS A FIXED FOCUS LENS.

THAT'S RIGHT. NOW JUST KEEP WATCHING--



THE QUARTER RAN OUT. IT'S JUST BLACK.



WELCOME TO MY WORLD.



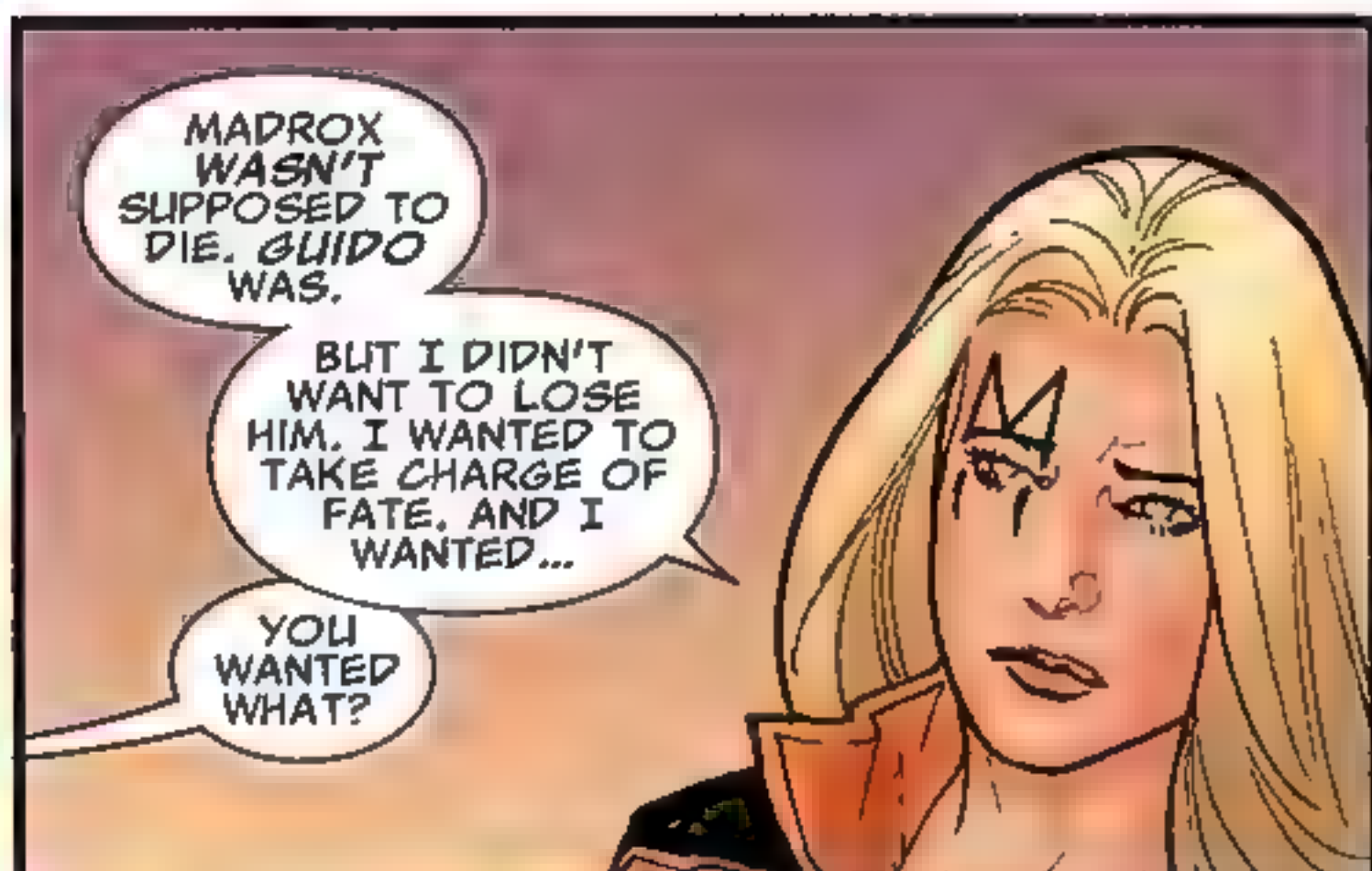


YOU'RE SAYING THE CLOSER IN TIME YOU GET TO PEOPLE... EVENTS...

THE HARDER IT IS TO SEE, YEAH.

AND NOW... RECENTLY... IT'S LIKE A BIG BLACK CURTAIN WAS DRAWN OVER CERTAIN PARTS.

WHY?



MADROX WASN'T SUPPOSED TO DIE. GUIDO WAS.

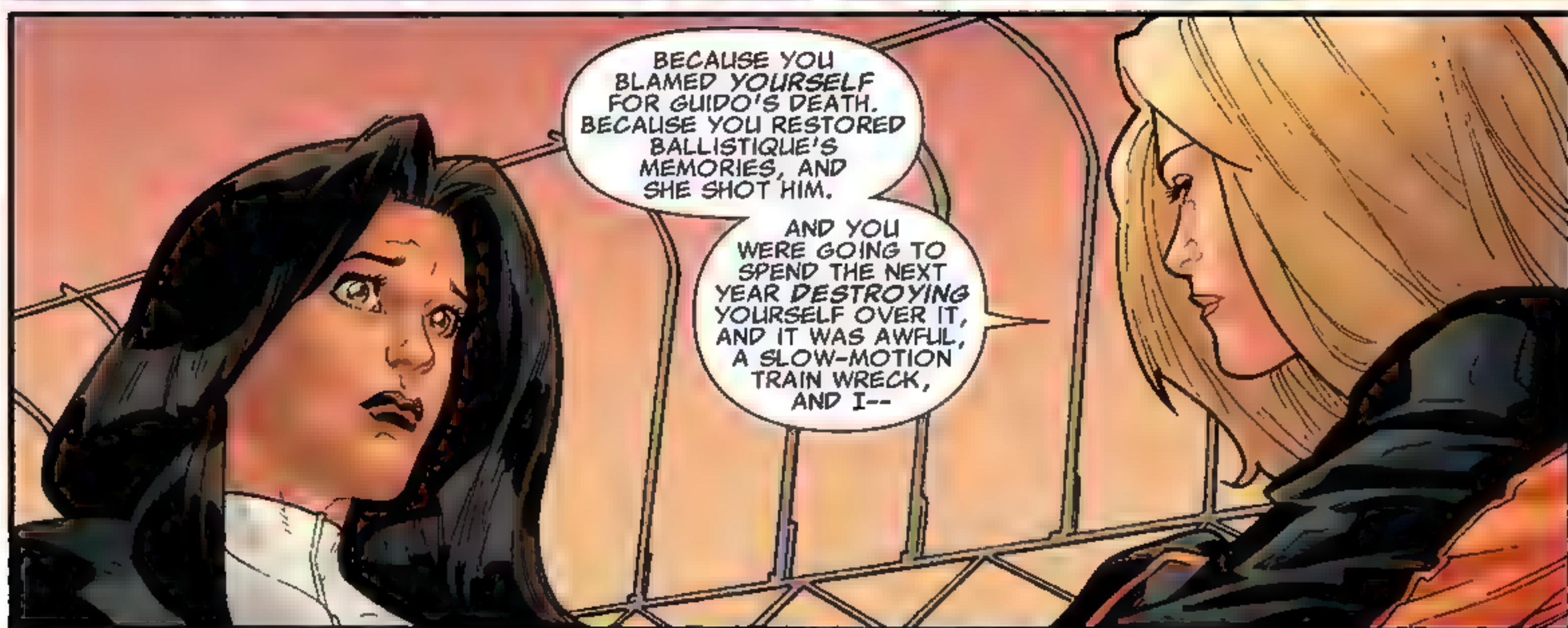
BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO LOSE HIM. I WANTED TO TAKE CHARGE OF FATE. AND I WANTED...

YOU WANTED WHAT?



I WANTED TO SPARE YOU.

ME? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?



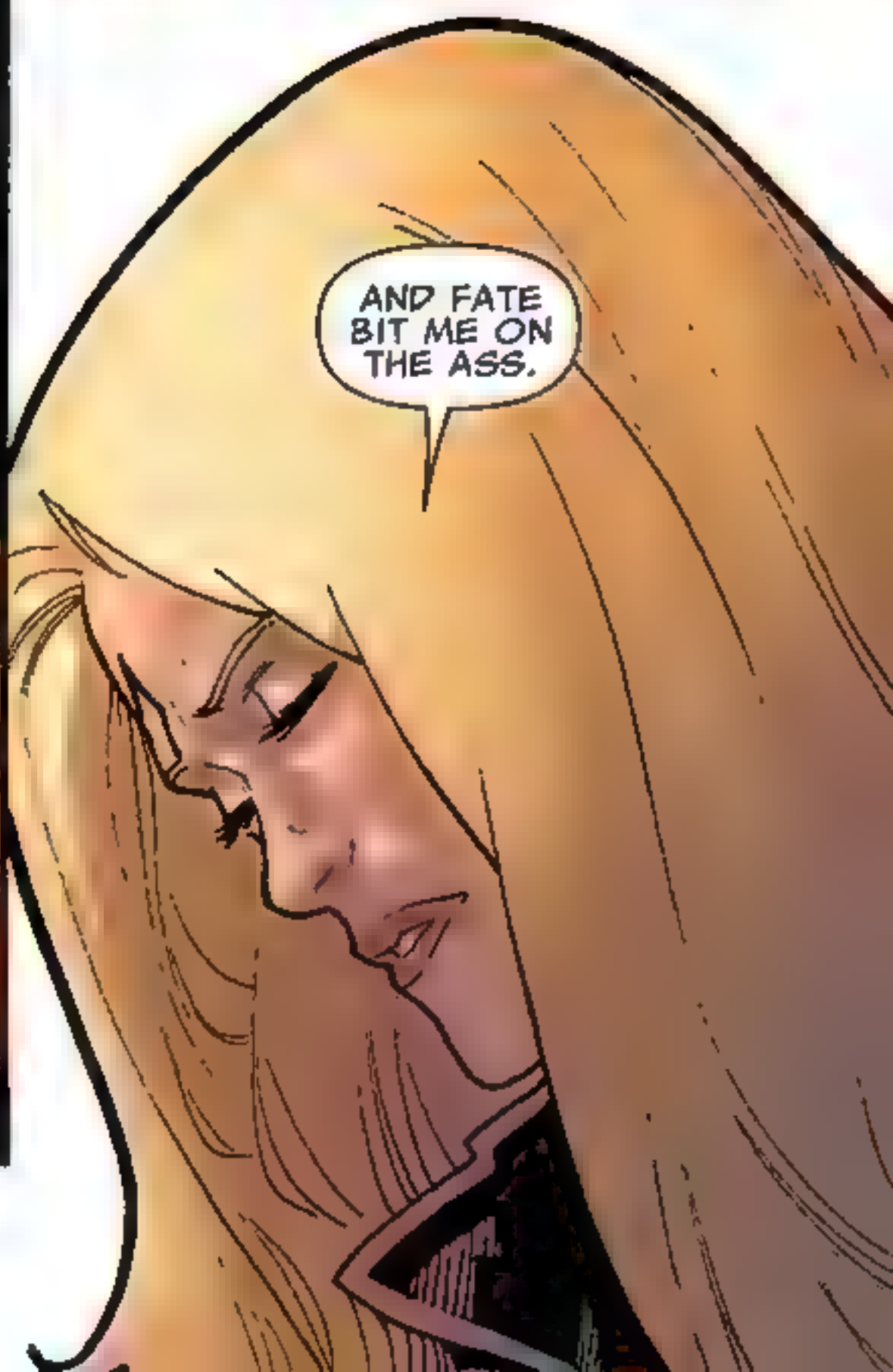
BECAUSE YOU BLAMED YOURSELF FOR GUIDO'S DEATH. BECAUSE YOU RESTORED BALLISTIQUE'S MEMORIES, AND SHE SHOT HIM.

AND YOU WERE GOING TO SPEND THE NEXT YEAR DESTROYING YOURSELF OVER IT, AND IT WAS AWFUL, A SLOW-MOTION TRAIN WRECK, AND I--



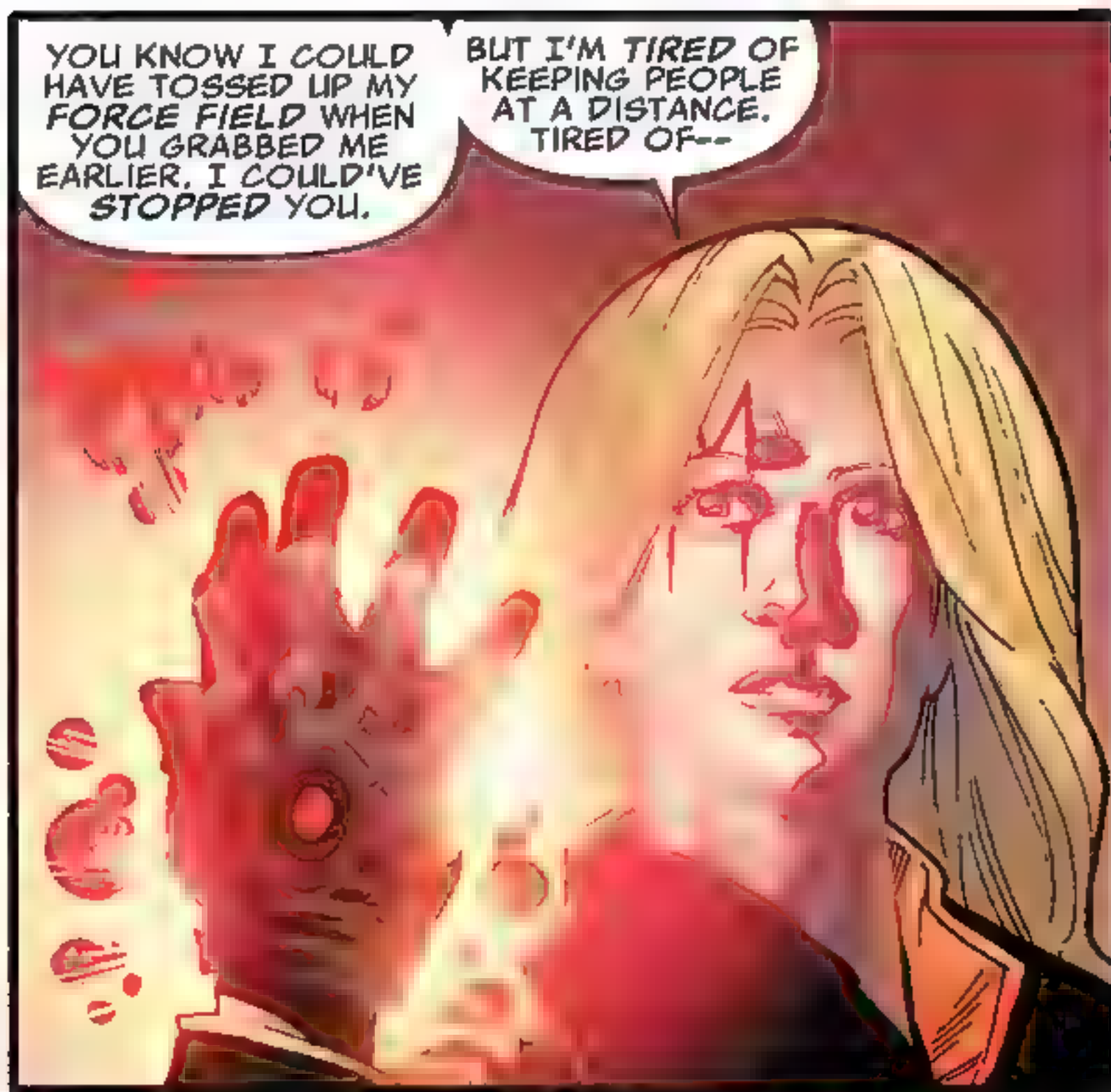
I WANTED TO AVOID THAT, BECAUSE EVENTUALLY YOU'LL BE MY BEST FRIEND IN THE WORLD.

AND I TOOK A CHANCE ON SPARING YOU THAT PAIN. SPARING US BOTH.



AND FATE BIT ME ON THE ASS.





YOU KNOW I COULD HAVE TOSSED UP MY FORCE FIELD WHEN YOU GRABBED ME EARLIER. I COULD'VE STOPPED YOU.

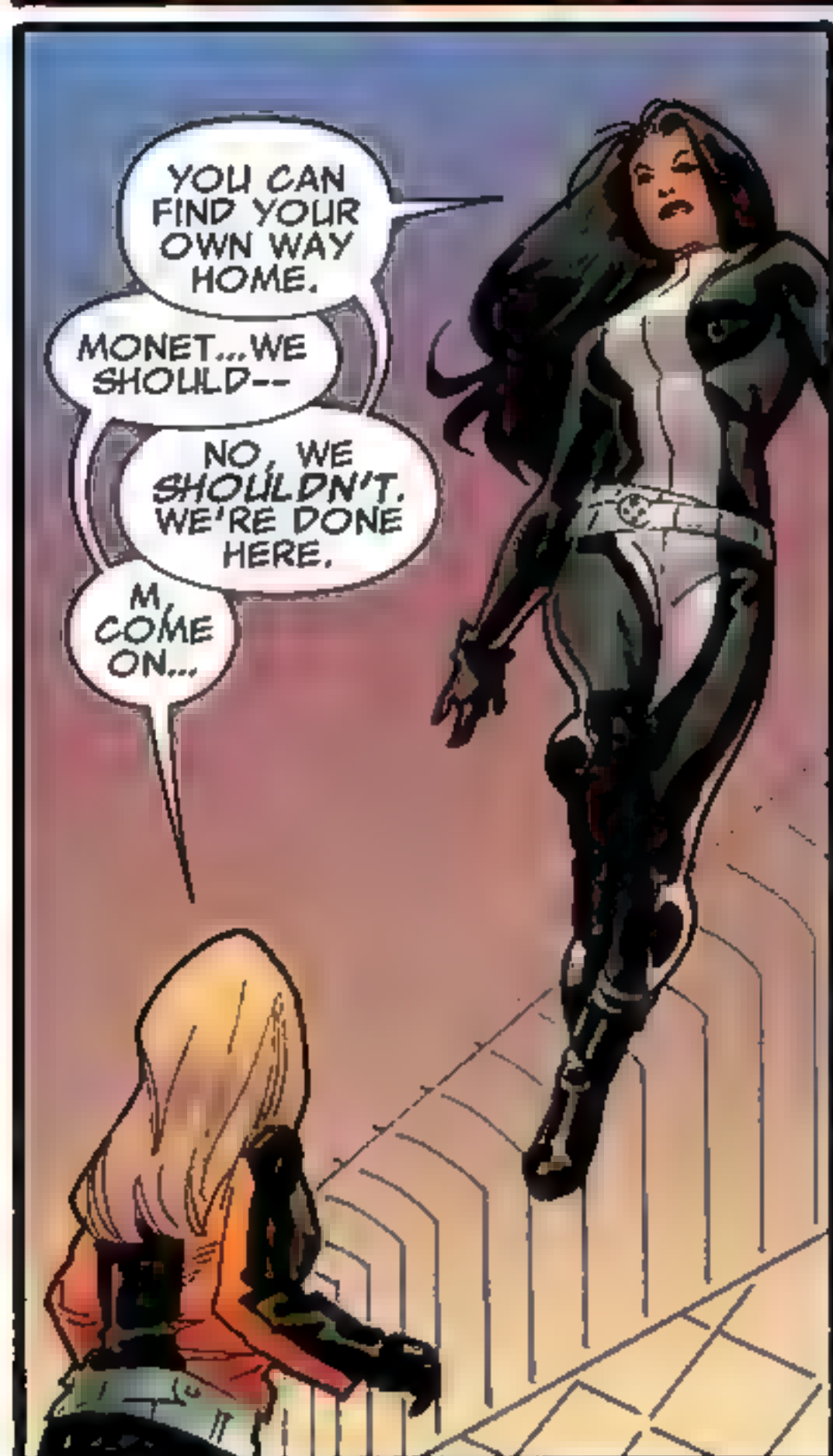
BUT I'M TIRED OF KEEPING PEOPLE AT A DISTANCE. TIRED OF--



OKAY, FINE. I GET IT.

I BELIEVE YOU, YOU DIDN'T BRING HIM BACK.

IT'S A MIRACLE, WHATEVER.

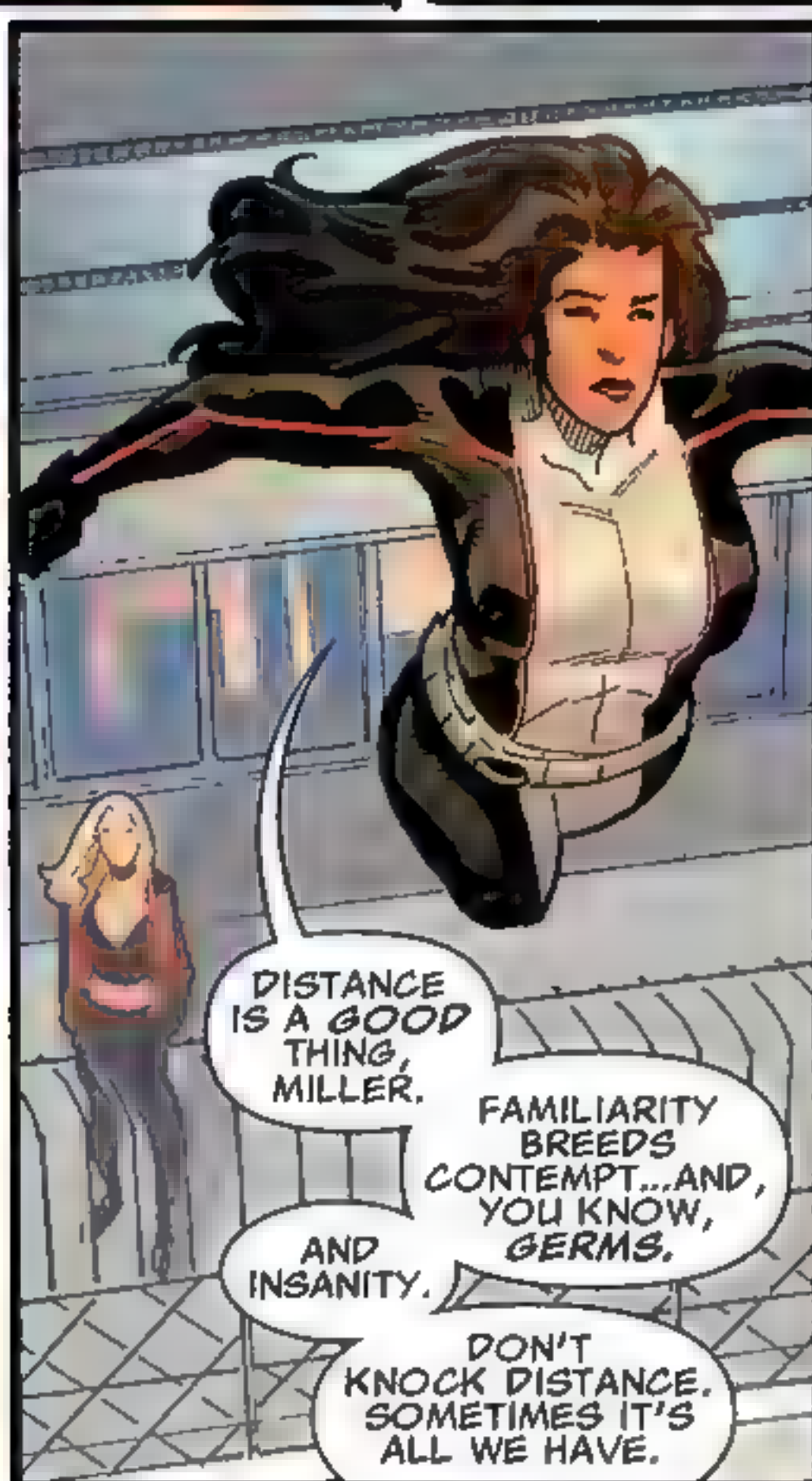


YOU CAN FIND YOUR OWN WAY HOME.

MONET... WE SHOULD--

NO, WE SHOULDN'T. WE'RE DONE HERE.

M, COME ON...



DISTANCE IS A GOOD THING, MILLER.

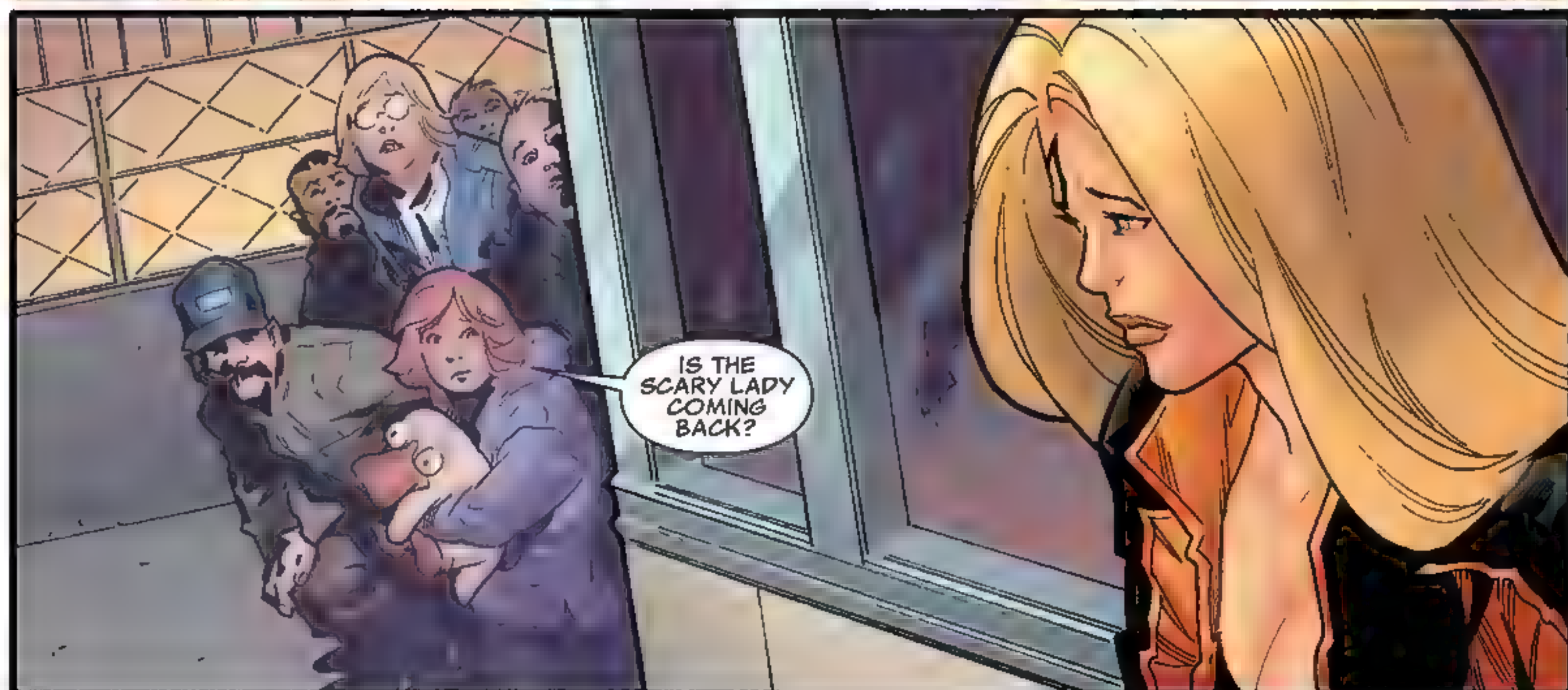
FAMILIARITY BREEDS CONTEMPT...AND, YOU KNOW, GERMS.

AND INSANITY.

DON'T KNOCK DISTANCE. SOMETIMES IT'S ALL WE HAVE.



UHM...



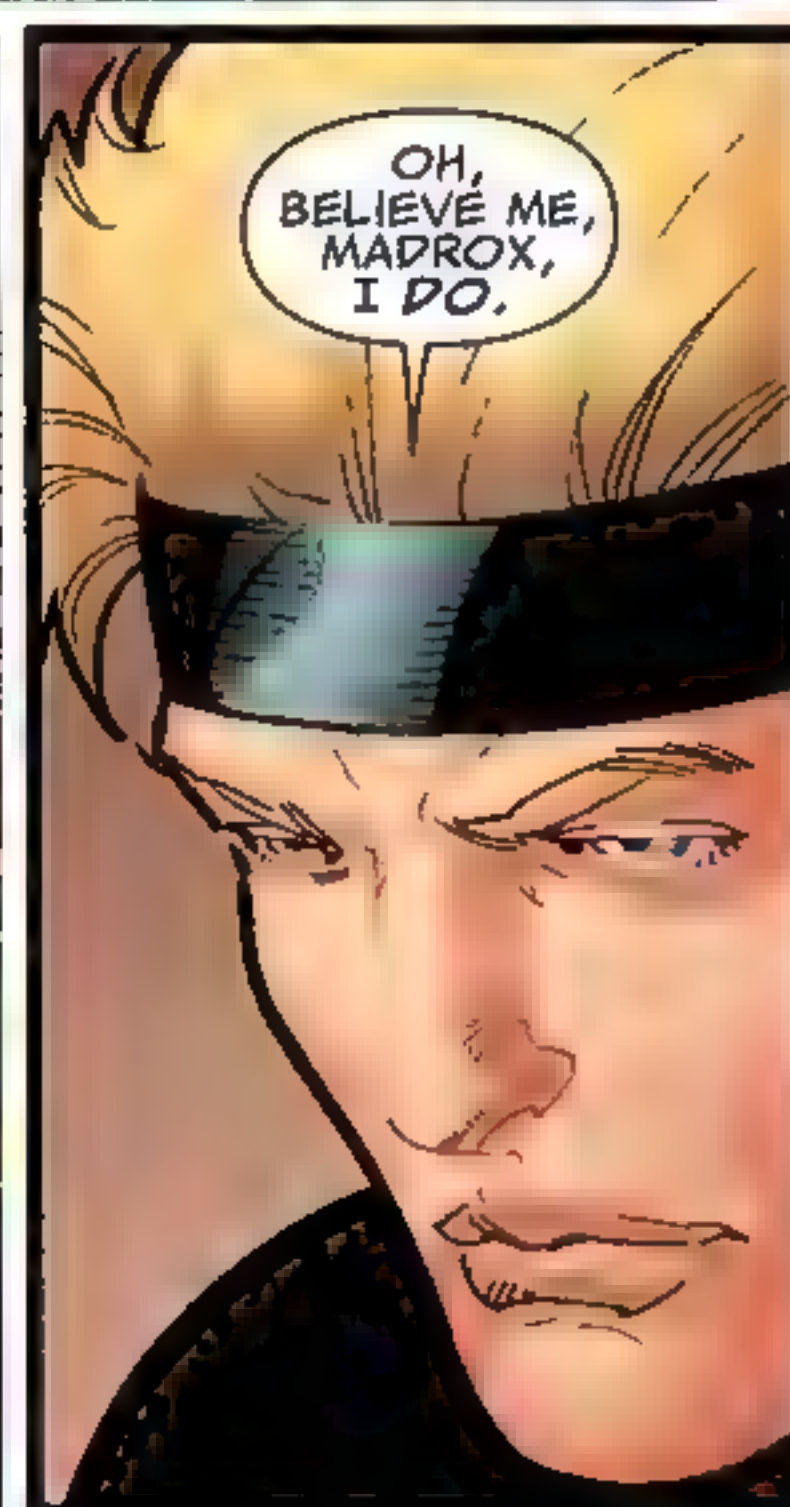
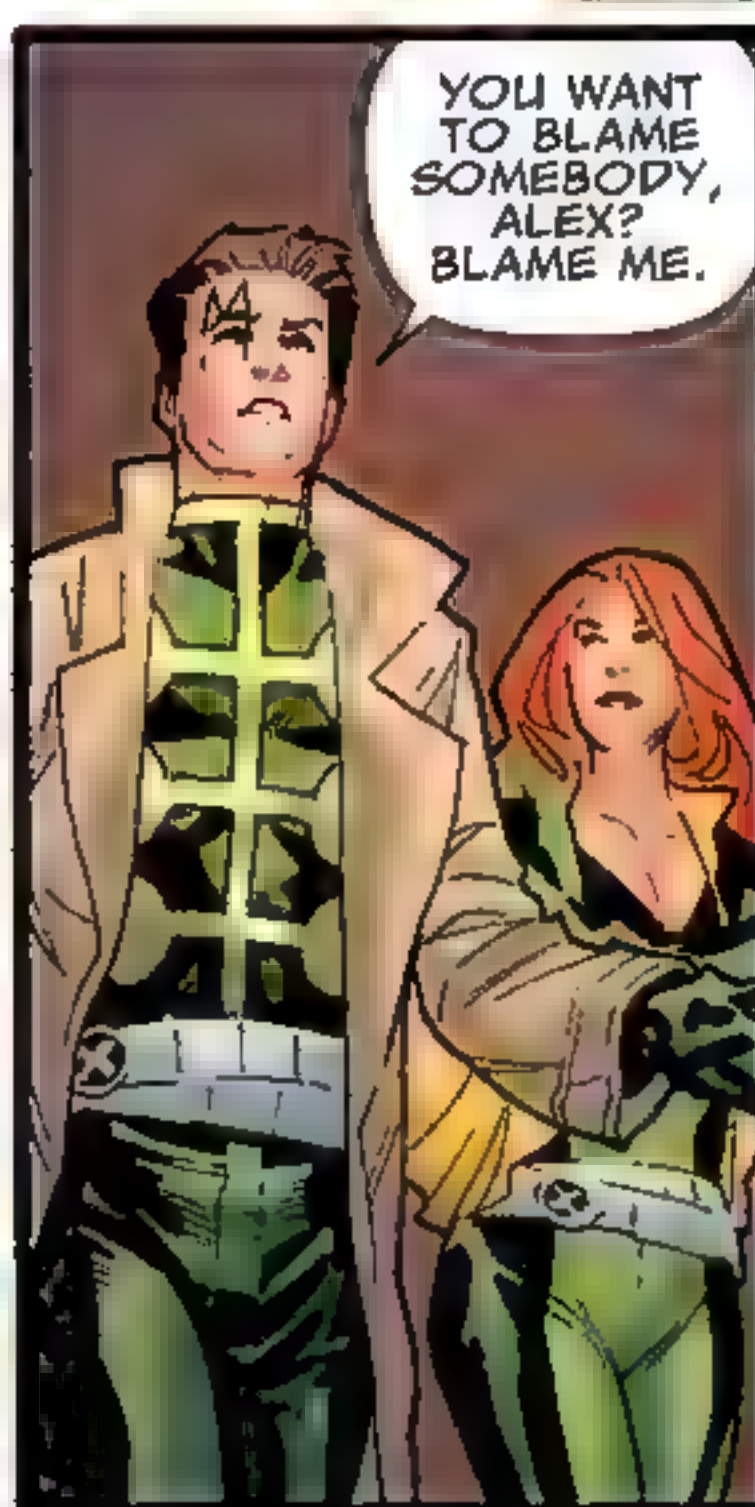
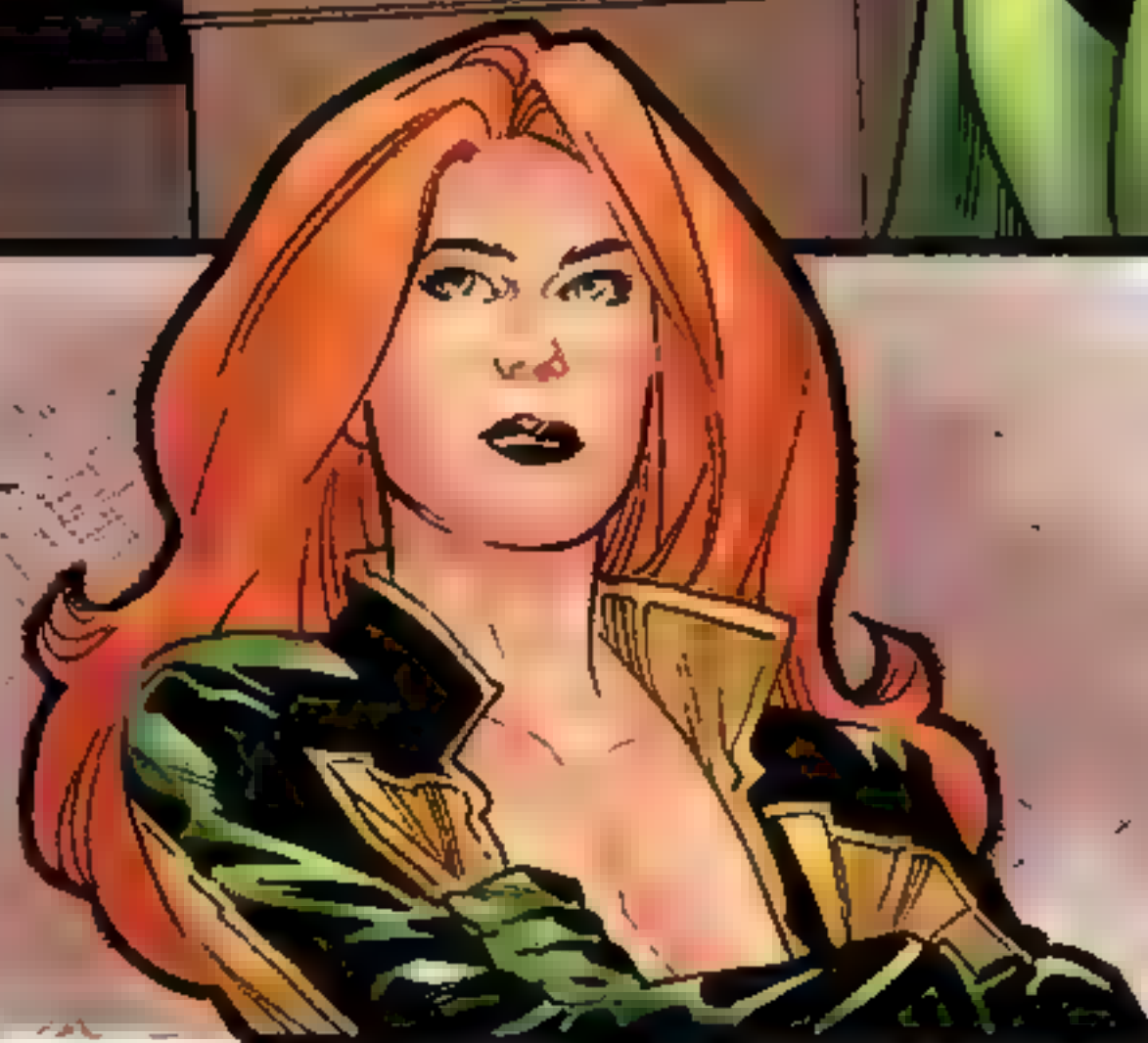
IS THE SCARY LADY COMING BACK?





NO, AND I TOLD YOU WHY, AND I DON'T APPRECIATE BEING SECOND-GUESSED.

I'VE DONE A WEE BIT OF LEADING MYSELF, AND I KNOW WHEN TO GIVE TEAMMATES SOME SPACE.







I HAD THIS TEAM RUNNING LIKE A WELL-OILED MACHINE. YOU SHOW UP FOR HALF AN HOUR AND EVERYTHING'S IN DISARRAY.

THAT'S ME. THE SAND IN THE OIL. THE FLY IN THE OINTMENT. THE MONKEY IN THE WRENCH.



MONKEY IN THE--NEVER MIND. SO WHAT HAPPENS NOW? YOU TAKE BACK LEADERSHIP OF THE GROUP?

HELL, YOU COULD BE A DUPE. EVEN AN EVIL DUPE. WE'VE HAD TO DEAL WITH A FEW OF THOSE.

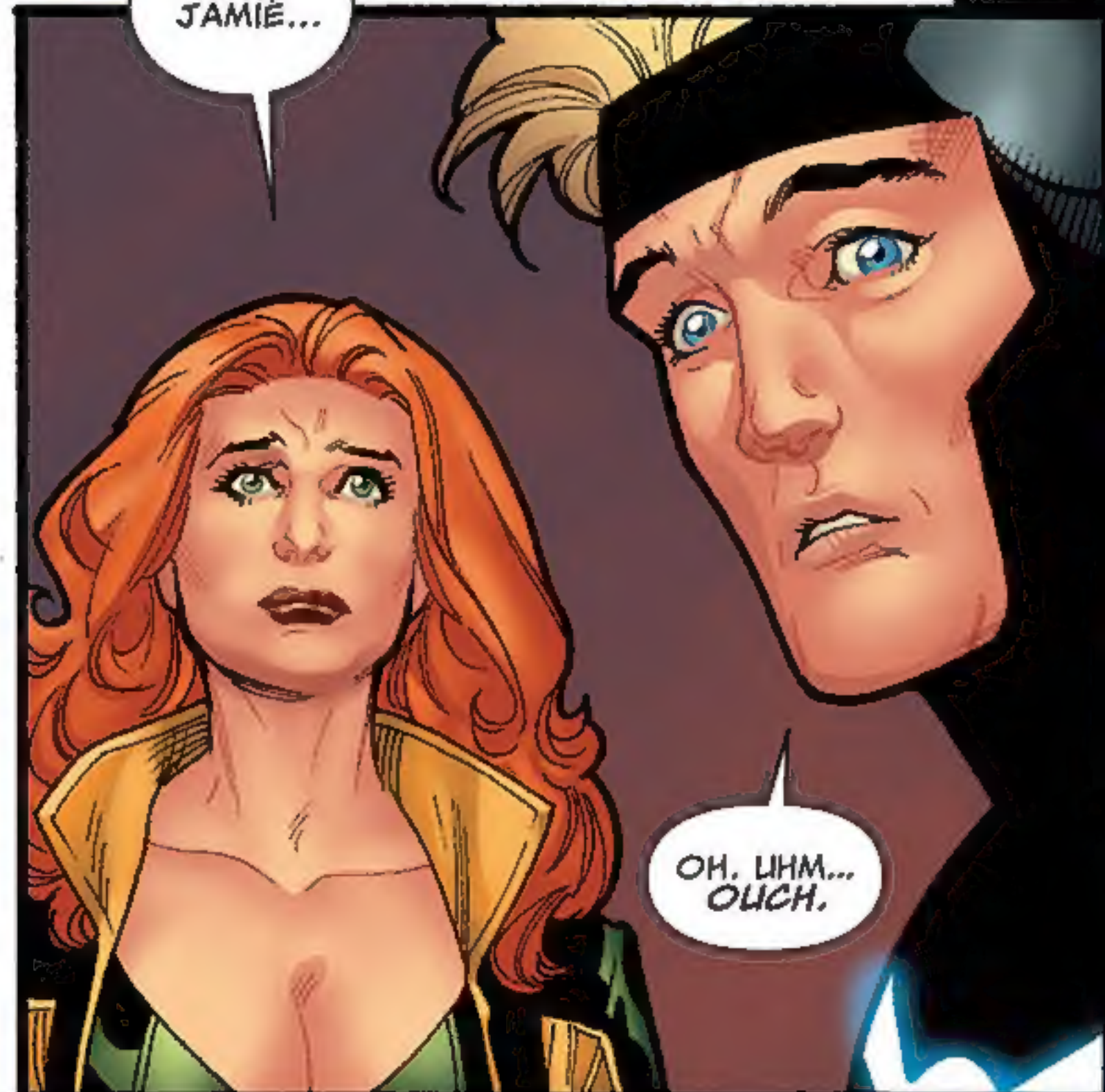


LAYLA VOUCHES FOR HIM.

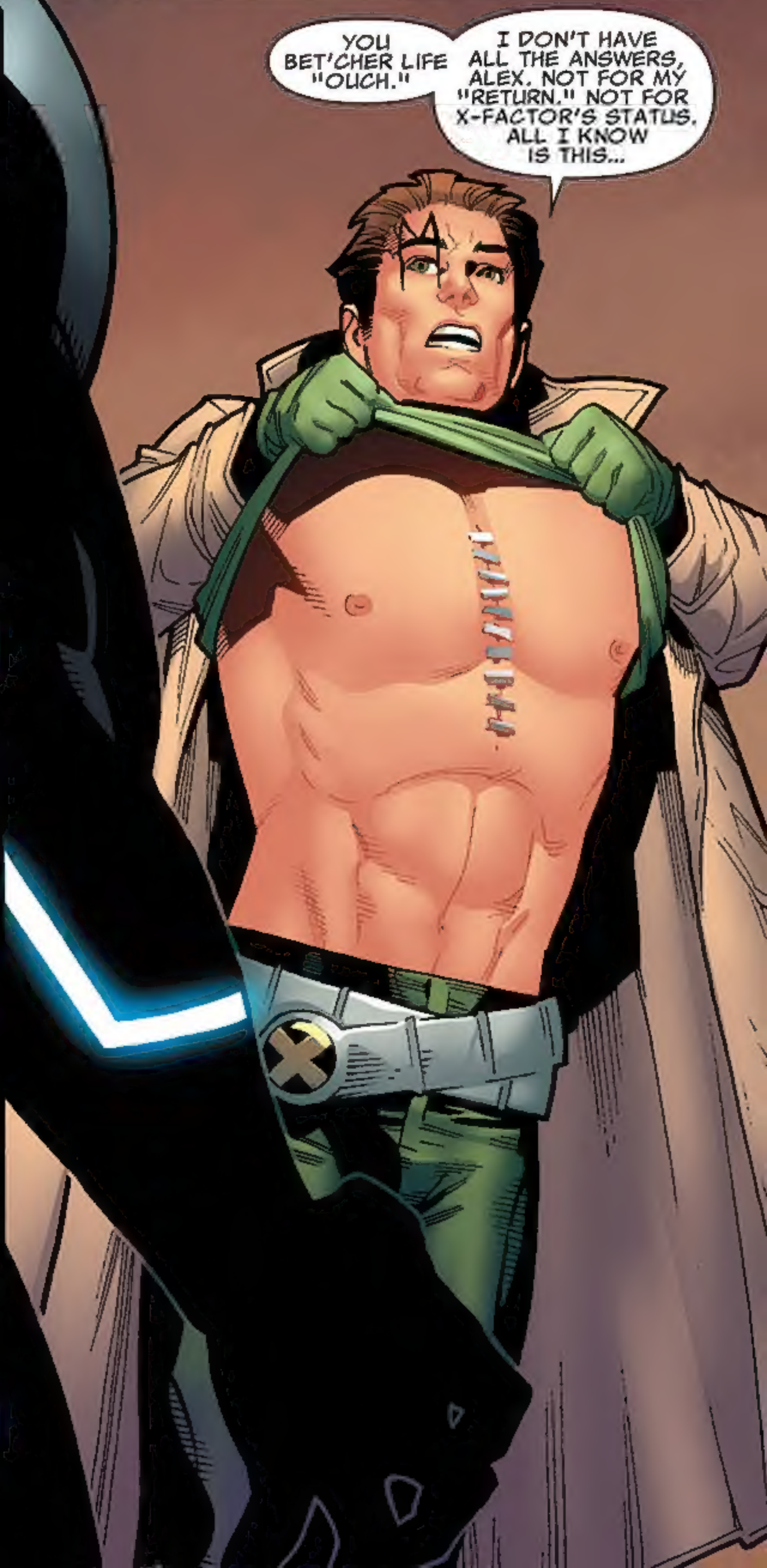
LAYLA, WHOSE REMAINS MIGHT BE SMEARED ALL OVER SOHO BY NOW. THAT'S JUST GREAT.

A DUPE WOULDN'T HAVE THIS.

OH, JAMIE...



OH. UHM... OUCH.



YOU BET'CHER LIFE "OUCH."

I DON'T HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS, ALEX. NOT FOR MY "RETURN." NOT FOR X-FACTOR'S STATUS. ALL I KNOW IS THIS...





"...WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER THAN APART."



YES. YES, I SUPPOSE WE ARE.



SO...THIS APOCALYPSE... THIS PLAN YOU INTEND TO SET INTO MOTION... IT INVOLVES DESTROYING ALL THE MUTANTS?

MY DEAR ISOLATIONIST... YOU'RE THINKING FAR TOO SMALL.

AM I?



WE INTEND TO DESTROY EVERY SINGLE MUTANT...EVERY SUPER HERO...

...EVERYONE WHO HAS EVER PUT ON A COSTUME AND ATTEMPTED TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE.



AS FOR THE PLAN ITSELF...IT'S ALREADY BEEN SET INTO MOTION.



"NOW IT'S JUST A MATTER OF HOLDING ON FOR THE RIDE."





Peter David and team "X-Factor" welcoming you to another edition of the "X-Factor" letters page, the best letters page in any title named "X-Factor." Hey, I have a bet with "X-Factor" editor Daniel Ketchum and "X-Factor" assistant editor Jordan D. White that I can't get the title "X-Factor" into the "X-Factor" lettercol intro eight times. Wait. Lemme check... nuts. "X-Factor." There.

Dear Peter David You Magnificent Scamp,

Thank you for writing. Your work on X-Factor has reinvigorated for me what super hero comics can be and infused in me a joy for these books that I can't properly articulate. Your work in other forms has also inspired me profoundly from the days of my youth (not to try and make you feel old) and your other books (and guide) have made me more than ever dedicated to writing and the arts.

Thank you for taking characters I have cared about and been curious about (Madrox, Layla Miller, Wolfsbane, Rictor, Monet) and turning them on their heads whilst spinning them. Your characters have more depth and charisma than any other in these funny books I'm so addicted to. I'm looking forward to all you have planned, and how the much entangled web you have strung will, strand by strand, unravel and knot up again.

Keep up the fantastic work,  
Ryan And  
Cincinnati, OH

After such effusive praise, Ryan, what can I say except...magnificent scamp? Really? I've been called lots of things, most of which can't be repeated in a comic with our rating, but that's new.

Team XF,  
Wow.

Normally, when reading comics, a good 90% of my focus is on the dialogue. As long as the art makes basic sense, I'm satisfied. But then... I opened this issue.

Frankly, I didn't care what the heck was going on, as long as it stayed so darn pretty. The colouring in particular was the best I can remember seeing in any title in years. Even now, I keep flicking through the issue and grinning at its purtiness. No matter how hard I try, I can't find even the most minisquirrel (stet) of slip-ups to complain about (and yes, I do read comics to find mistakes in the art...life's just been that good to me).

It wasn't until my third read-through that I began to appreciate the especially clever dialogue, and after resisting it for so many years, I think now's the time to ask for Deadpool to come visit Siryn. Between silent arguments in the caption boxes and the current art team undoubtedly giving Deadpool the sexiest abs since Patrick Zircher (yes, the ambiguity is intentional), it might be fun. And at the very least, it'll make Siryn feel awkward. She's been a little too sane lately...

Keep up the BRILLIANT work, guys!

Adrian J. Watts  
Melbourne, Australia

Deadpool did have a cameo back in issue #200, I think it was. No immediate plans for the motor-mouthed one to show up anytime soon, but if Theresa's sanity is bothering you, don't worry...things are going to be getting pretty nuts, pretty soon. Oh, and I wasn't sure whether you meant to write "minuscule" or were just being whimsical in writing "minisquirrel," but I decided to keep it in there, allowing for the possibility that you were being a magnificent scamp.

Mr. David and XF Crew,

Thank you for creating such an awesome book. I've loved "X-Factor" and Madrox since 1991 (I wasn't even 10 years old). I just finished reading #232 and the phenomenal battle of Dormammu and "Multiple Mage" spurred me into letting you know how much I love your work.

I would say I was a fan before I even knew it. When I picked up "X-Factor" #71, for some reason unbeknownst to me I felt it was the prize of my collection (hell, I still feel it is...followed closely by Spider-Man vs. Wolverine #1 that my brother's friend Rusty gave me). I'm sorry you're such an underrated book, because I think back to laughing forever, as a kid, at the fact that Madrox pranked the entire team and glued the lid to the mayo jar. And also how angry I was that there was something so horrible as the Legacy Virus that took his Tri-Life. More people should appreciate how truly wonderful you guys and this entire team are.

I'd left comics for a while, but the Civil War brought me back into the fold. I read the X-Men Universe TPB and fell in love all over again. Soon thereafter, I purchased "Multiple Choice" and realized how well you all really work for these characters. I decided to start some subscriptions a few months ago and my purchase was based entirely around getting more X-Factor in my hands. You've never disappointed me with an issue. Ever. Albeit there was a time or two that I had to shake my finger at the book and say "Oh, Peter David, you wily bastard." I'm very excited for any sort cross-stories that may come from AvX!

Thank you again,  
Tommy "Tommy Rules!" Deibel

We're certainly glad to have you back in the fold, Tommy. And I know exactly where you're coming from. When I hit my teens, I felt I'd outgrown comics. And I remember exactly what pulled me back in: I saw "X-Men" #95 on the stands and thought, "What did they do to the X-Men? Who are THESE guys?" I bought it, loved it, tracked down #94, and then went to my first comic con in years and purchased "Giant-Size X-Men #1" for all of a buck. And now here we both are: We few. We happy few. We band of scamps.

Dear Mr. David,

I read on the internet that there would be a big surprise ending for issue 232. Having been a long time reader, I knew that could mean almost anything. However, I am happy to say it couldn't have ended more perfectly! Thanks for not killing off Jamie or radically changing his character. Also, thanks for the revelations of his multiplicity, the introduction of X-Factor's new villains, and of course, the great romantic ending! That was quite possibly the sexiest resurrection scene ever!

I'm really excited to see Jamie's developed character interact with the team's new additions. It's been nearly twenty years since I've read a Havok and Polaris story and I'm glad you're writing them again. I hope their characters haven't been abused too much in the other X-books. I understand they've been in space for a while. Has that affected their personalities? Are they more serious now? Will they always be wearing their uniforms everywhere they go? Will Lorna Dane still be the insecure, big sister of the team? Will Alex still be the resourceful, yet reluctant leader? It seems like he's sided with Wolverine and not Cyclops in this whole schism event. Does that mean anything? And why aren't the two ever on the same team?

Sure, I could share some nice words about how your book has lured me back to comic books and how I'm grateful to see characters I've grown up with reflect real adult issues. But instead, I'll spare you the mushy thank you stuff and simply make some potentially horrible suggestions.

First, how about more personal stories? You know, like the Shatterstar/Rahne issue a few months back? Also, what do you think about making the series bi-monthly like they use to do back in the 90's? And what about a spin off or maybe another one shot like the Quicksilver/Layla Miller issues? The team's getting rather big, and I'm getting desperately attached. Just some thoughts. In any case, as long as you keep writing them, I'll keep reading them!

Chris Cortez

Smart move avoiding the mushy stuff, Chris, because other guys this outing already have you covered. In terms of personal stories, that's exactly what we've got coming up over the next few issues: a series of smaller stories focusing on various members of our team, giving the readers a chance to know them better and each of them to know each other. Making the series bi-monthly? Every two months? Chris, we have the book coming out semi-monthly sometimes and there are people who STILL want more, so cutting back on frequency doesn't seem the way to go. No spin-offs planned, and honestly, I don't understand why fans keep saying our cast is too large. Has anyone checked out the number of regulars in some of the other X-books lately? Maybe our cast is just the scamiest.

-PAD



